Sturdy Apartments

5

Hisae Iwaoka

saturn apartments 5

HISAE IWAOKA



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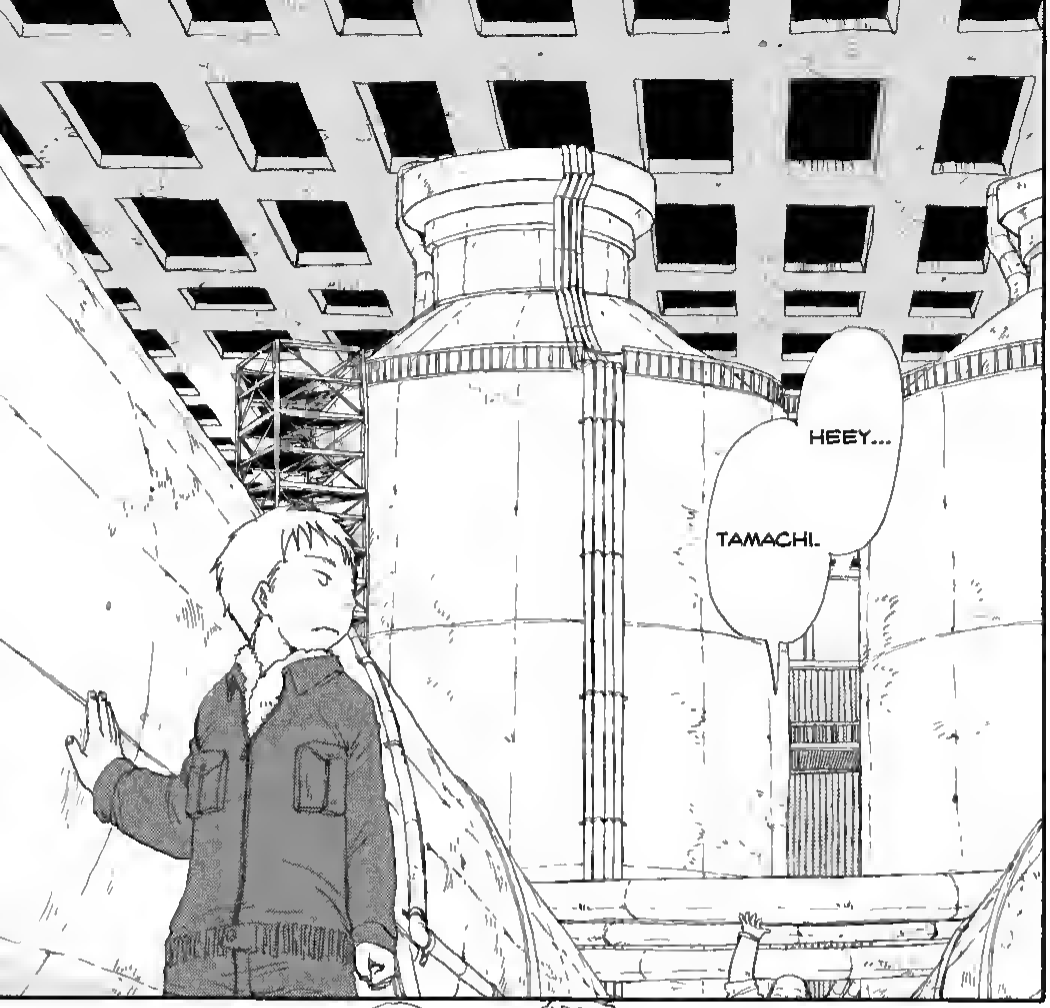
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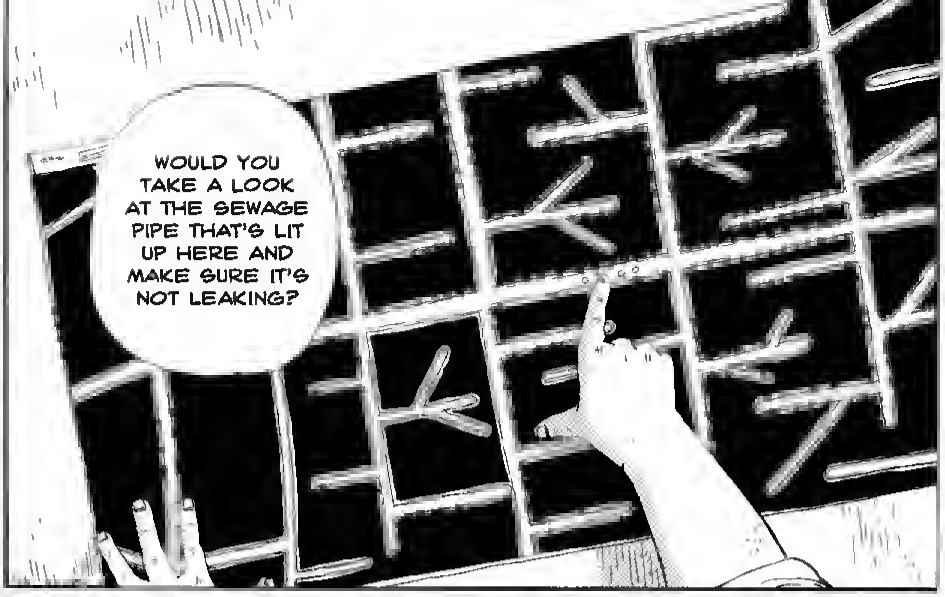
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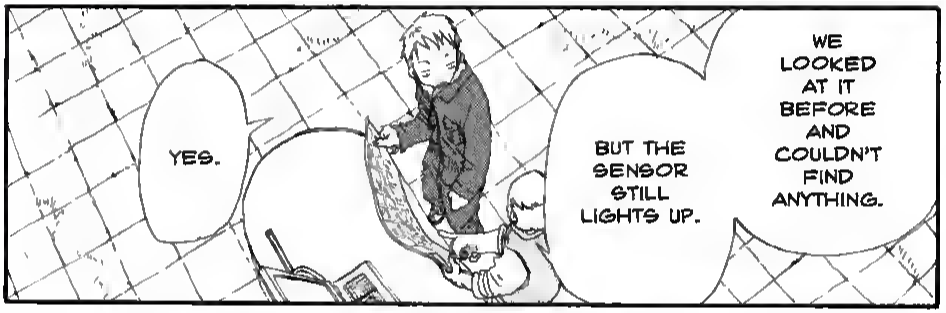
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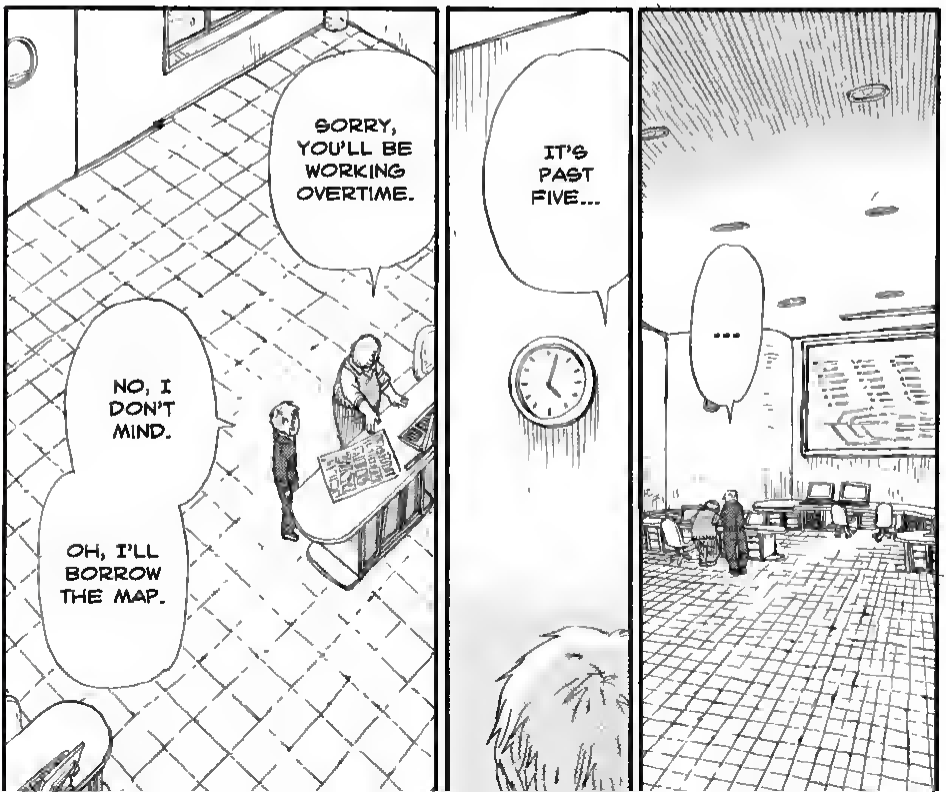




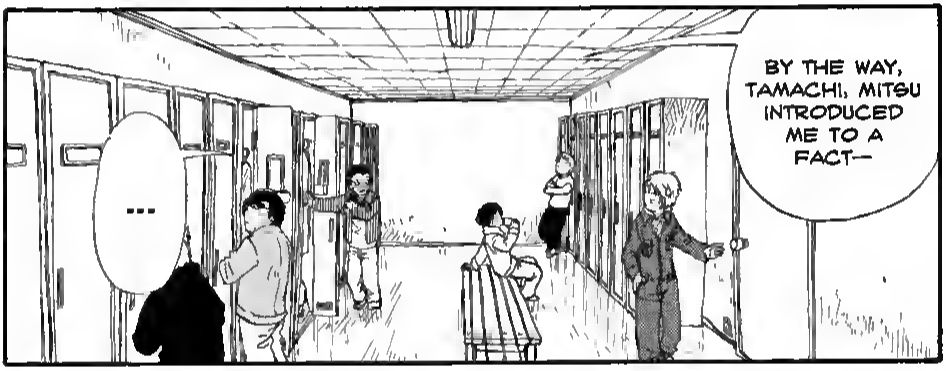
floor 36: the egg woman

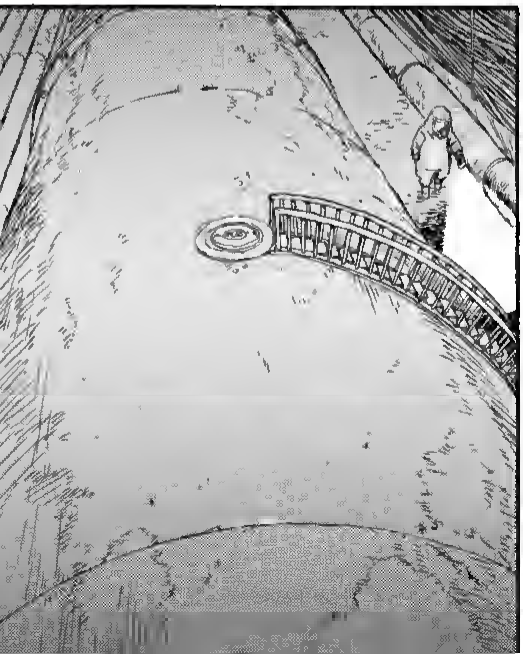

WOULD YOU TAKE A LOOK AT THE SEWAGE PIPE THAT'S LIT UP HERE AND MAKE SURE IT'S NOT LEAKING?


YES.
BUT THE SENSOR STILL LIGHTS UP.
WE LOOKED AT IT BEFORE AND COULDN'T FIND ANYTHING.

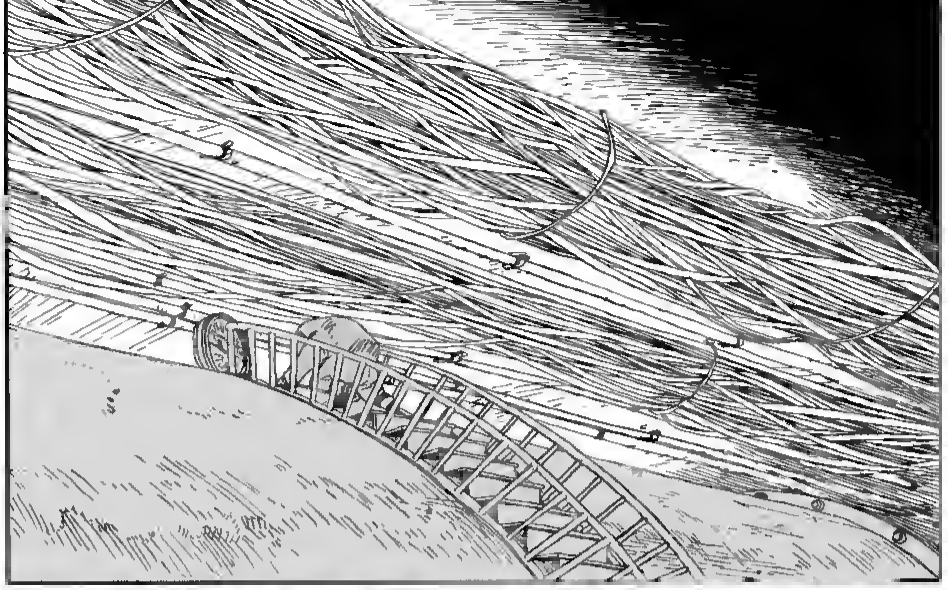

SORRY, YOU'LL BE WORKING OVERTIME.
NO, I DON'T MIND.
OH, I'LL BORROW THE MAP.
IT'S PAST FIVE...
...


HMM HMM HMMMM.
SOHTA, CAN YOU WORK OVERTIME TODAY?
CHAK
WORK? OH, SORRY, I'VE GOT SOMEPLACE TO GO...
AH, OKAY.

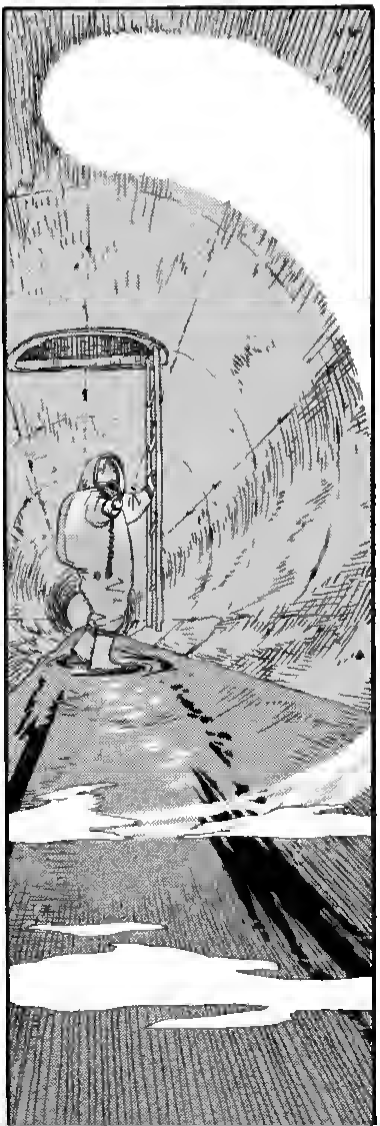

BY THE WAY, TAMACHI, MITSU INTRODUCED ME TO A FACT—
...




WAH! I WAS ABOUT TO SPILL SECRETS AGAIN.
I'M TAKING OFF.
Bye Tamachi



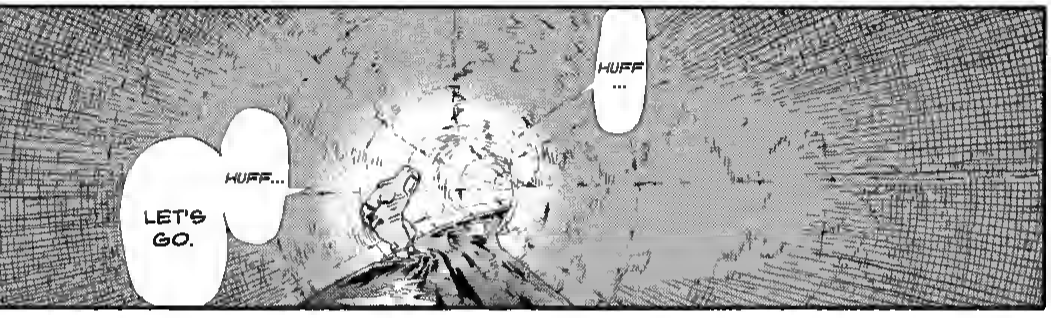

NOTHING SEEMS WRONG.




SPLOSH...
SPLOSH




THIS SUIT LOOKS A LITTLE LIKE THE WINDOW WASHERS' SUITS...
HA HA.


HUFF...
HUFF...
LET'S GO.


I'M REALLY SORRY.
BUT THESE TASTE WATERY...
MS. HARUKO ?


YOU ONLY HAVE THESE EGGS?
SORRY.
ALL RIGHT.

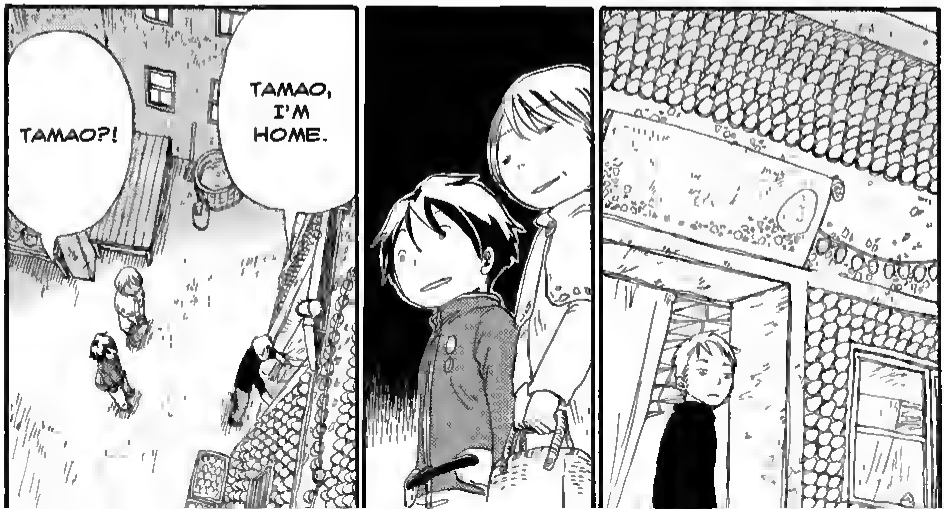



TAMACHI.
AH! TAMACHI SHOULD KNOW.
...
DO YOU KNOW OF A PLACE THAT SELLS GOOD EGGS?
WHA?
UM...
OH, MITSU, GOOD TO SEE YOU HERE.
IT'S GETTING OLD, BUT THERE WEREN'T ANY CRACKS OR HOLES.
TAMACHI, HOW DID IT LOOK?
ALL RIGHT, YOU CAN GO HOME NOW.
I SEE. THEN IT'S FINE.
HE MIGHT'VE GONE HOME ALREADY.
IS HE STILL WORKING?
SURE.
SHALL WE HEAD OVER TO THE POWER PLANT ANYWAY?
OH.
OH.


HARUKO AND MITSU...
WOW! GLAD TO SEE YOU!
SO, YOU KNOW A LOT ABOUT EGGS?
CAN YOU RECOMMEND A PLACE THAT SELLS GOOD EGGS?
ZOOM
...SURE.
THANK YOU!
LOOM
YOU'LL HAVE TO COME TO MY PLACE. IS THAT ALL RIGHT?
BIO-
YOUR PLACE?!
YOU WON'T MIND, MITSU?
SOUNDS FUN.
NO.
TMP
TMP


CREEPY
PACKED
NO, THAT'S NOT POSSIBLE.
MAYBE HIS PLACE IS DECORATED WITH EGG SHELLS.
THIS IS MY PLACE.
heh heh
WHISPER
WHISPER
WHISPER
MITSU, TAMACHI REALLY LOVES EGGS, DOESN'T HE?
I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING TAMACHI'S PLACE, MS. HARUKO.


COME IN.
...


TAMAO?!
TAMAO, I'M HOME.

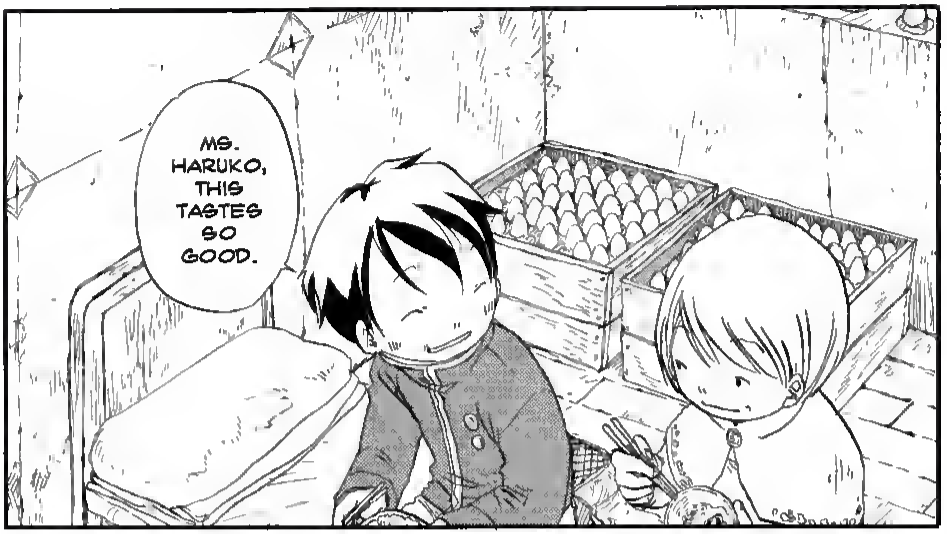

SURE.
MAY I GIVE SOMEONE SOME OF YOUR EGGS?
I'VE NEVER HEARD ABOUT IT, BUT OF COURSE HE COULD HAVE A GIRL-FRIEND...
COMING.
SO TAMACHI HAS A GIRLFRIEND?
HIS GRAND-MOTHER!
I'M TAMAO TAMACHI, HIS GRAND-MOTHER.
CHAK!
THIS IS HIS GIRL-FRIEND?!
WELCOME. THANK YOU FOR COMING OVER.

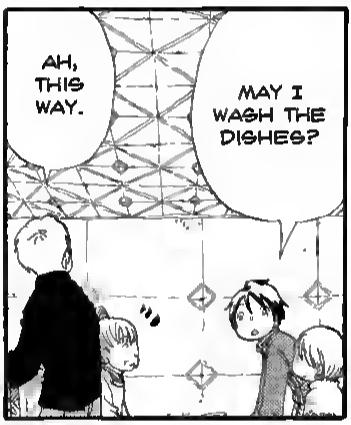

BRING ME THE EGGS
WHERE ARE THEY?
HMM? SO YOU WANTED SOME DELICIOUS EGGS?
SHE GETS ANGRY IF I DON'T CALL HER BY NAME.
I DON'T WANT BE CALLED "GRANDMA."
BRING THE EGGS
ALL RIGHT, I'LL GO FIND SOMETHING TO PUT THEM IN.
AH, THEY'RE PRECIOUS EGGS, SO I USED THEM AS AN OFFERING.
COME IN.
WE SHOULDN'T BE TALKING OUTSIDE...


TAMACHI'S GRAND-FATHER.
THIS GOOD ENOUGH?
THANK YOU.
WHAT DO YOU DO?
THIS ONE WANTED TO DO SOME-THING ELSE, SO I TOOK IT OVER INSTEAD.
TAMACHI'S PARENTS ALSO PASSED AWAY WHEN HE WAS STILL A CHILD...
...SO I'VE TAKEN OVER THE FAMILY BUSINESS.
YES, HE PASSED AWAY ALREADY.
WHOA.
I'M A CRAFTSWOMAN WHO WORKS WITH EGG-SHELLS.


BUT...
BUT SHE DOESN'T NOTICE.
SHE WANTS IT.
ISN'T IT?
THIS ONE'S LOVELY.
HER PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT... ISN'T GOING TOO WELL...
WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THESE MERRY GLASSES?
STARE
SLP
...SO I'M THINKING OF MAKING SOMETHING DIFFERENT.
...NOWADAYS THEY DON'T SELL TOO WELL...
SOUNDS GOOD.
HMM? DID I INTRODUCE MYSELF?
UH, NO THANKS.
A PAIR FOR YOU TOO, MITSU?


RICE AND EGG YOLKS PICKLED IN SOY SAUCE.
UH, THANK YOU.
YOU WANNA TASTE AN EGG?
You're too close
ONE OF MY CUSTOMERS IN THE UPPER LEVELS GAVE THEM TO ME.
The egg yolk is thick
WOO
I can get artificial rice though.
REAL WHITE RICE AND EGGS ARE RARE.
CHOMP
A LITTLE, BECAUSE MY HUSBAND WAS A MASTER CRAFTS-MAN.
SO THE UPPER LEVELS KNOW ABOUT EGG CRAFTS TOO!


MS. HARUKO, THIS TASTES SO GOOD.


AH, THIS WAY.
MAY I WASH THE DISHES?


THANKS FOR THE MEAL.


...


I WENT TO APOLOGIZE ABOUT HIS FATHER.
WHA?


I WENT TO SEE MITSU ONCE, A LONG TIME AGO.
I ONLY LOOKED AT HIM FROM FAR AWAY.


THEY'RE GOOD BOYS.
AREN'T THEY?

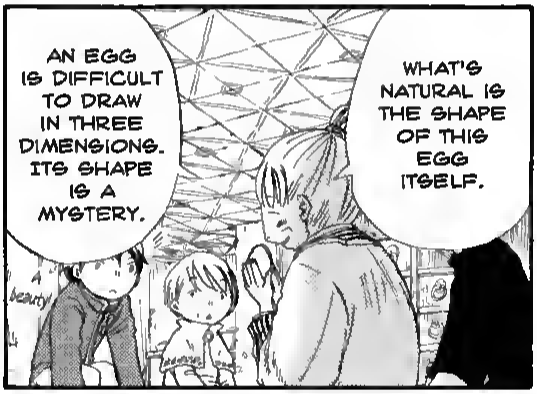

AND HE'S RIGHT.
THAT MUST'VE BEEN KAGE-YAMA.
HE SAID, "YOU DON'T NEED TO APOLOGIZE, IT'S NOT TAMACHI'S FAULT."
THEN MITSU'S NEXT-DOOR NEIGHBOR STOPPED ME.
OH.
Since we got to know each other
PLEASE ACCEPT THIS.
FLOAT
SLP
I'LL FINISH UP...
...
SLIP


THANK YOU.
WE'RE DONE WITH THE DISHES.
...
PHEW
OH.
...WANTS THE OMELETS I MADE THE OTHER DAY.
JIN...
...WHY DID YOU WANT EGGS?
SO, HARUKO ...
SHP
TAMAO, PLEASE.
Um
JIN WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO TELL THE DIFFERENCE, 'CAUSE HE'S GOT NO SENSE OF TASTE.
I WANTED TO MAKE BETTER ONES AND HAVE HIM COMPARE THE TWO.
(Plus Jin didn't eat the first omelets.)
HE SAID HE WANTED TO HAVE THEM AGAIN, BECAUSE THEY WERE GOOD.
THE ONES I HAD DELIVERED TO TAMACHI.
AH.
THE INSPECTOR ATE ALL OF THEM, THOUGH...


SO, YOUR HUSBAND WAS A CRAFTSMAN.
DIDN'T TAMACHI WANT TO BECOME ONE TOO?
THIS ONE HATED SITTING STILL.
MY HUSBAND OFTEN SAID...
...HE DIDN'T WANT TO DISPLAY OBVIOUS WORKMANSHIP.
HE WANTED TO CREATE SOMETHING NATURAL...
...AS IF THAT WAS HOW IT WAS INTENDED FROM THE VERY BEGINNING.
I WONDER WHAT "NATURAL" MEANS, THOUGH.
I BEGAN BY FOLLOWING HIS EXAMPLE, SO MAYBE I DON'T QUITE UNDERSTAND.
IF WHAT MY HUSBAND MEANT BY "NATURAL" WAS THE PLANTS AND ANIMALS OF EARTH'S ENVIRONMENT ...
...WE'VE NEVER SEEN ANY OF THEM.

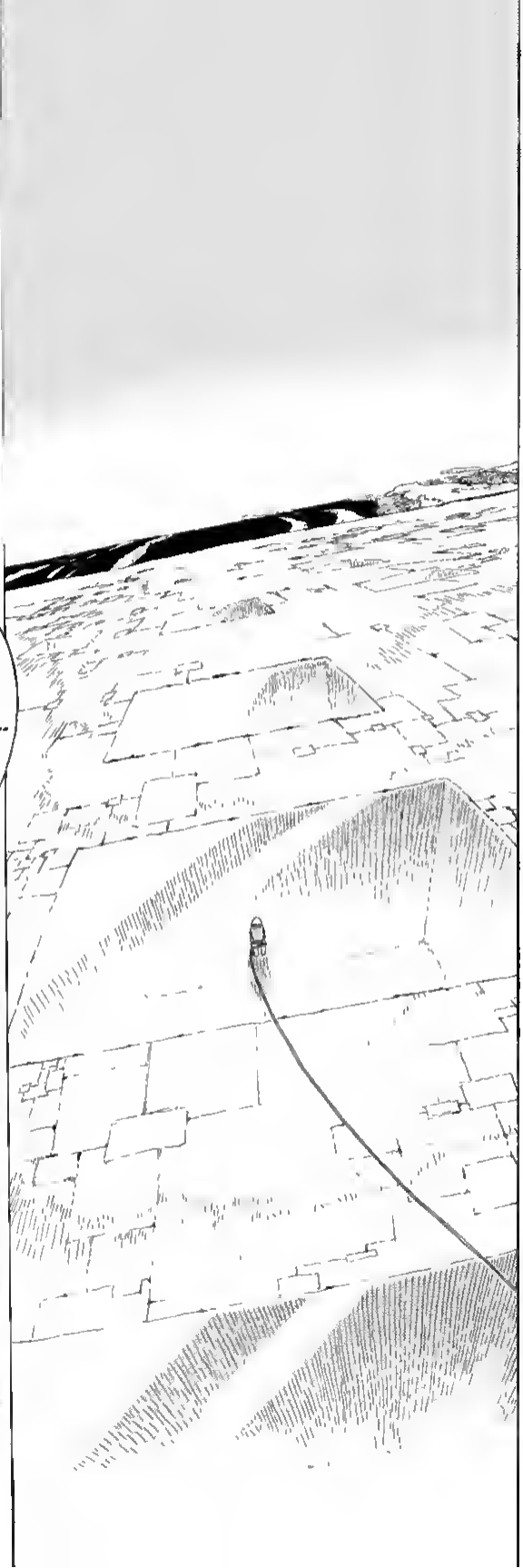

HE SPENT MANY MONTHS AND YEARS TRYING TO CREATE A "NATURE" THAT HE'S NEVER SEEN.
ISN'T THAT STRANGE?


FOR EXAMPLE?
MAN-MADE STRUCTURES ARE BEAUTIFUL TOO.
MOO


AN EGG IS DIFFICULT TO DRAW IN THREE DIMENSIONS. ITS SHAPE IS A MYSTERY.
WHAT'S NATURAL IS THE SHAPE OF THIS EGG ITSELF.

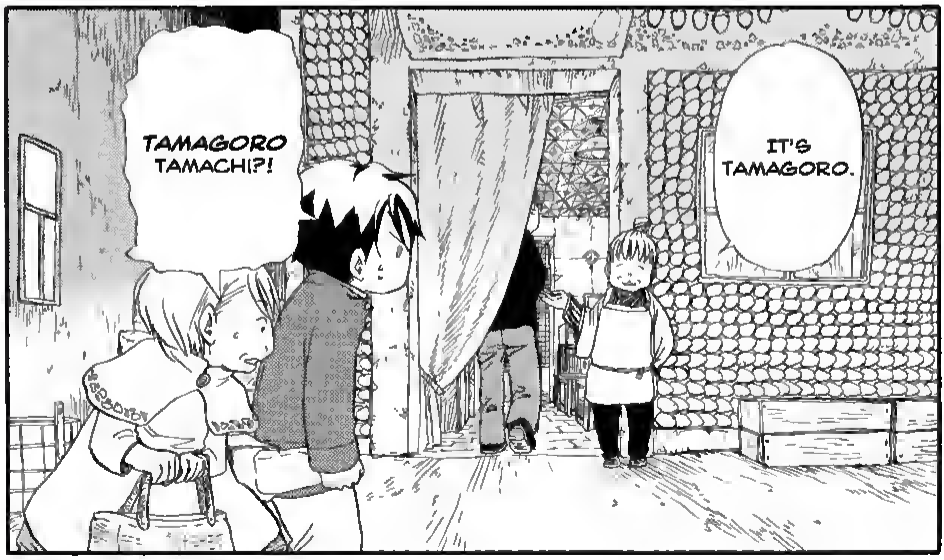

I'D LIKE TO TAKE A LOOK AT IT.
OHH.
WHEN I'M STANDING ALONE OUTSIDE THE WINDOWS OF THE RING SYSTEM, I FEEL IT'S REALLY BEAUTIFUL.

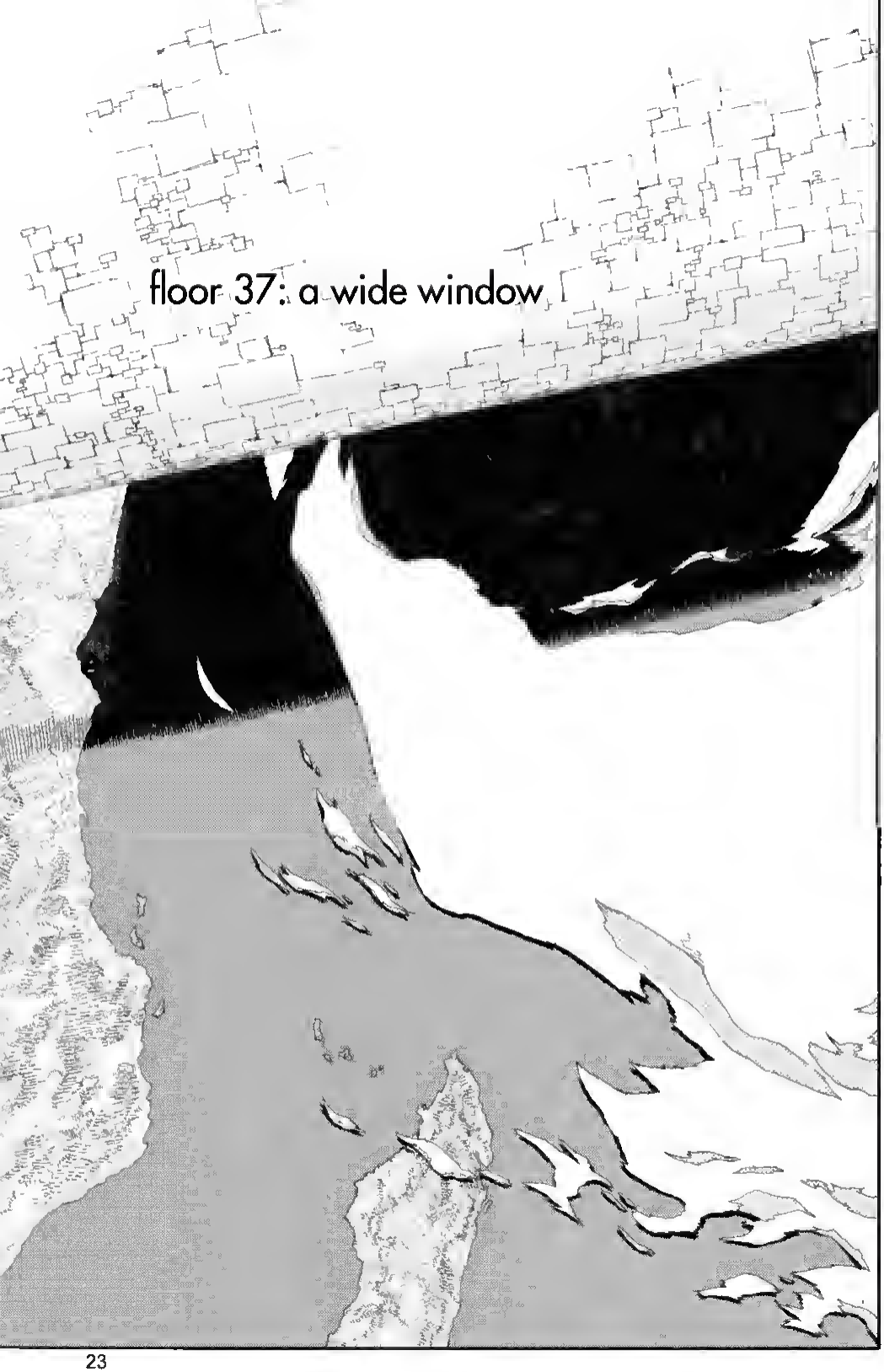

BUT, MITSU, AREN'T YOU JUST PATTING YOURSELF ON THE BACK FOR WASHING THE WINDOWS?
HUH? NO.
THE OUTSIDE...

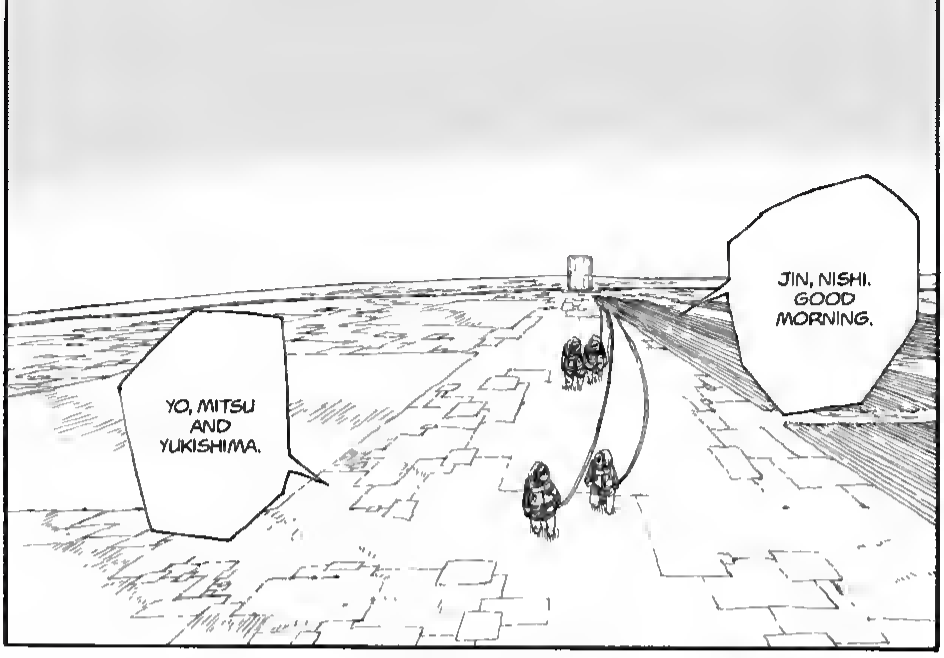


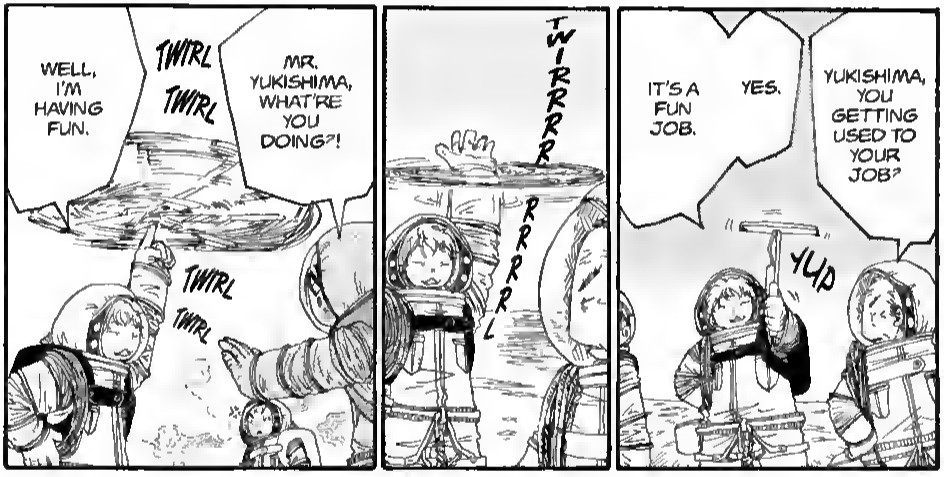

TAMAO, TAMACHI, THANKS FOR THE MEAL.
YES, YES.

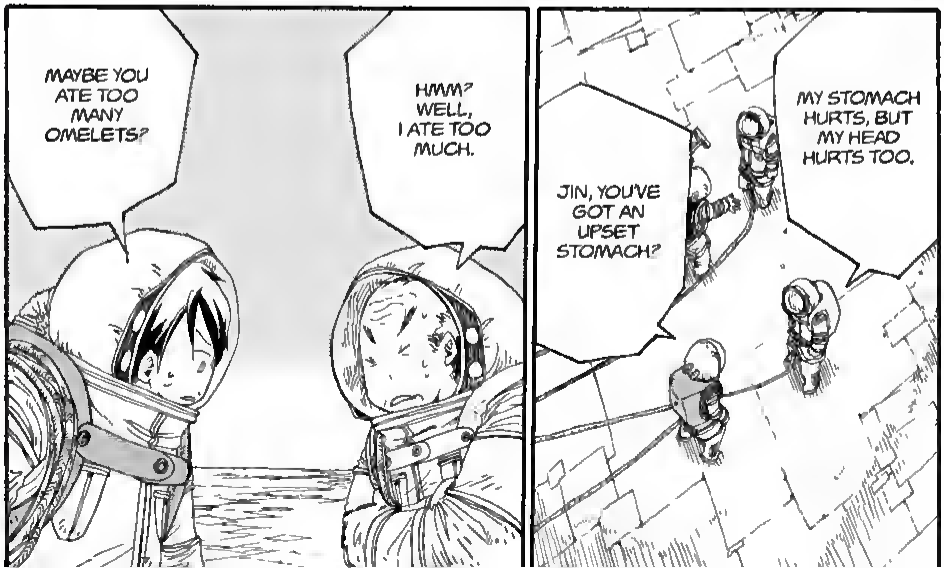
UM...WHAT'S TAMACHI'S FIRST NAME?
OH? YOU DIDN'T KNOW?


IT'S TAMAGORO.
TAMAGORO TAMACHI?!


floor 37: a wide window


JIN, NISHI. GOOD MORNING.
YO, MITSU AND YUKISHIMA.


WELL, I'M HAVING FUN.
TWIRL
TWIRL
MR. YUKISHIMA, WHAT'RE YOU DOING?!
TWIRL
TWIRL
TWIRRRR
RRRRL
IT'S A FUN JOB.
YES.
YUKISHIMA, YOU GETTING USED TO YOUR JOB?
YUP


MAYBE YOU ATE TOO MANY OMELETS?
HMM? WELL, I ATE TOO MUCH.
JIN, YOU'VE GOT AN UPSET STOMACH?
MY STOMACH HURTS, BUT MY HEAD HURTS TOO.

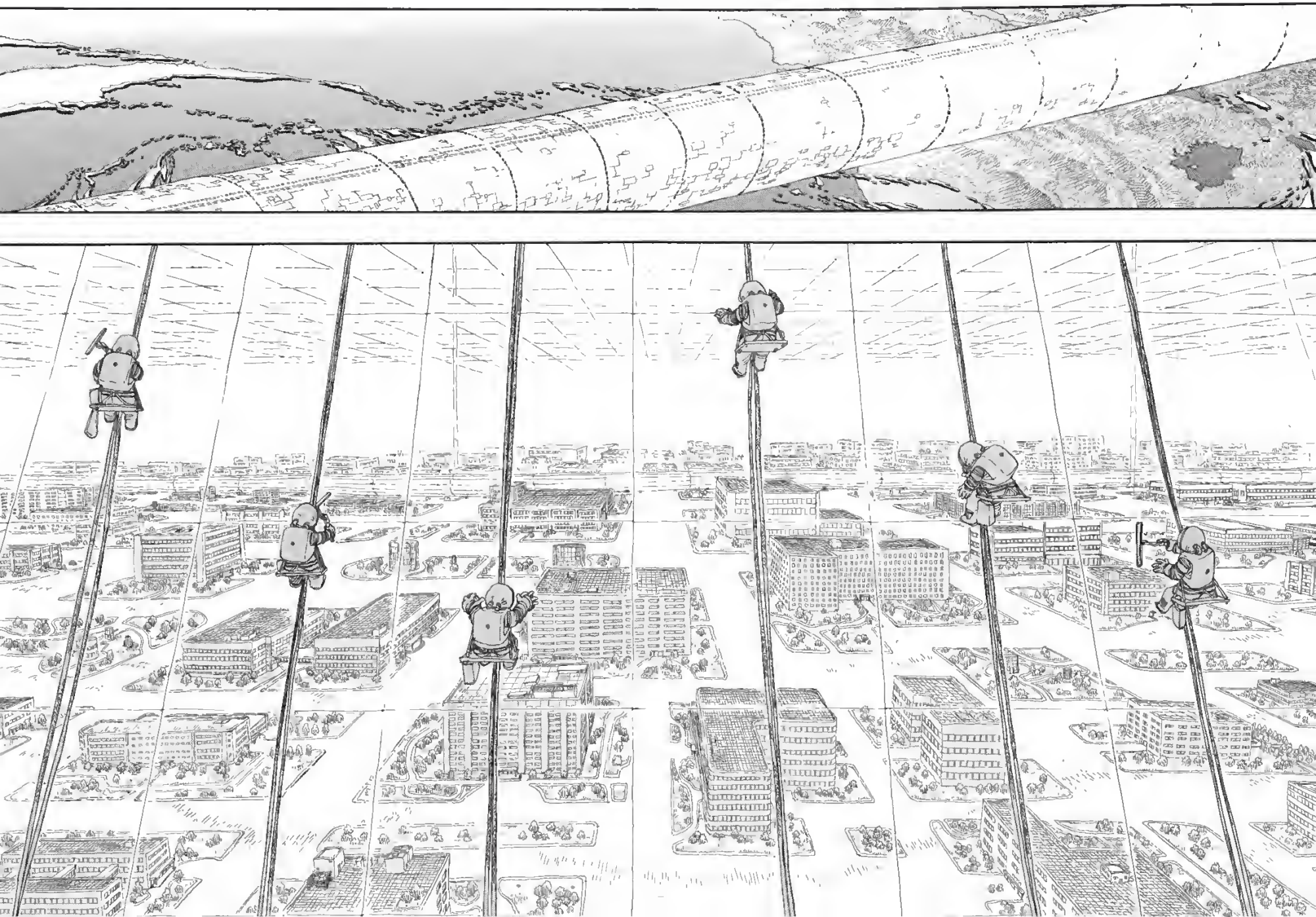

Sigh
YOU DON'T USUALLY TAKE DAYS OFF FOR YOURSELF.
UH, 'CAUSE YOUR STOMACH?
I'D LIKE TO TAKE TOMORROW OFF...
Hahh
Gah
HARUKO MUST'VE MADE A LOT OF THEM.
Watch out!
UGH.
HOW'D YOU KNOW?!
...
WELL, I ONLY NEED TO DECIDE WHO DOES WHAT, THEN CHECK THEIR WORK WHEN THEY'RE DONE.
I GOTTA BE IN CHARGE.
...BUT TOMORROW WE START CLEANING THE MIDDLE-LEVEL WINDOWS.
NO, NO, I'D ALREADY ASKED FOR TOMORROW OFF BEFORE...
I PASSED THE FIRST-CLASS QUALIFICATION, SO I CAN DO IT.
HMM?
SHALL I DO IT?


I'M NOT JOKING.
He looks scary
MITSU, ARE YOU KIDDING ME?!
HUNH?
I WANT YOU TO KEEP WORKING FOR A LONG TIME, AND—
PLEASE TAKE TIME OFF FOR YOURSELF SOMETIMES.
UNGH ?!
IF YOU CAN DO IT, I SHOULD BE ABLE TO DO IT TOO...
...SO DO IT.
WELL, IT IS A GOOD OPPORTUNITY...
WHAT?!
NOW HE'S GONNA TAKE OVER.

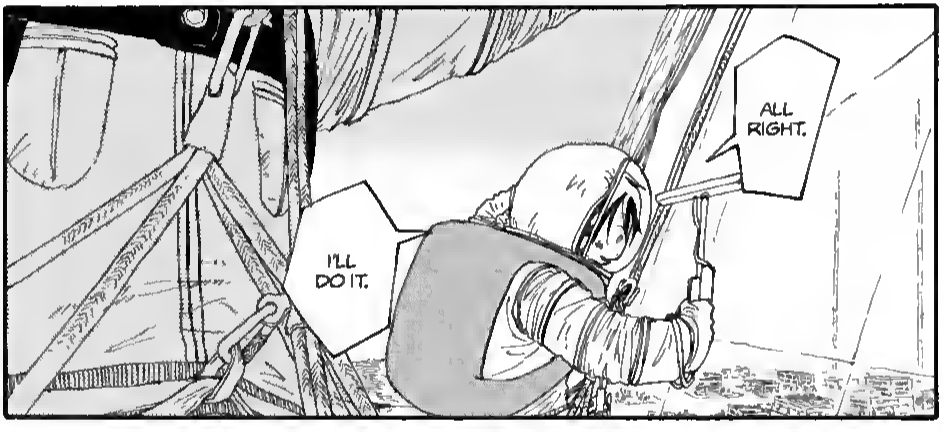

UGH. MY STOMACH HURTS.
YES.
..LET'S GET STARTED.
HEY, NISHI...
DON'T GIVE UP.
YEAH, YEAH.
I'LL DO A GOOD JOB.
YES.
ARE YOU PREPARING FOR TOMORROW?
HM?
WELL, I'M HEADING HOME.


AH! MAKOTO, I'LL BE IN CHARGE TOMORROW.
YES, I AM.
WHAT? MITSU'S IN CHARGE TOMORROW?
OHH.
HM?
I GOT TOMORROW OFF.
...
YEAH, YEAH.
WE'LL BE CLEANING THE MIDDLE-LEVEL WINDOWS FOR THREE DAYS, SO PLEASE START THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW.
NOT EVERY-ONE NEEDS TO WORK TOMORROW.
WHAT, MAKOTO, YOU GONNA SPOIL THINGS FOR MITSU?
AND I'D PLANNED TO TAKE TOMORROW OFF FROM BEFORE.


GOOD MORNING.
YO, MORNING.
I'LL FOLLOW IN JIN'S FOOT-STEPS.
I WILL.
CAN YOU DO IT?
HUH? WHAT?! MITSU'S IN CHARGE?
WE'LL USE THE D-AREA LIFT, SO PLEASE HAVE THE C-AREA LIFT READY FOR WHEN WE'RE FINISHED.
HEAD-QUARTERS.
BEEP
ROGER.
YOU PRETEND EVERYONE'S YOUR SPARRING PARTNER.
OOH, YOU'RE ALL FIRED UP.



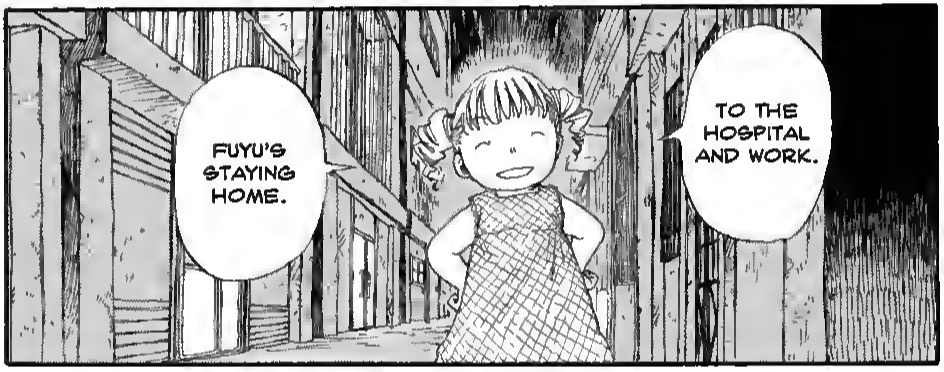

WHOA, THIS IS A GREAT VIEW.


ALL RIGHT.
I'LL DO IT.




YEAH!
YOU WANT SOMETHING TO EAT?
FUYU.
!!!
I ONLY CAME TO SEE HOW MR. KAGEYAMA'S DOING... SO I'LL JUST LEAVE.
IT'S THAT FUYU GIRL. WHAT A BOTHER.
STARE
!
IT'S MAKOTO.
SHE FORGOT MY NAME.
HUH? BROTHER SOMEBODY.


NO. MOMMY'S GONE TOO!
IS YOUR FATHER... ER, DADDY IN?
Hahh
TMP
WAH!
BROTHER MAKO.
LEAP
OMG-ED

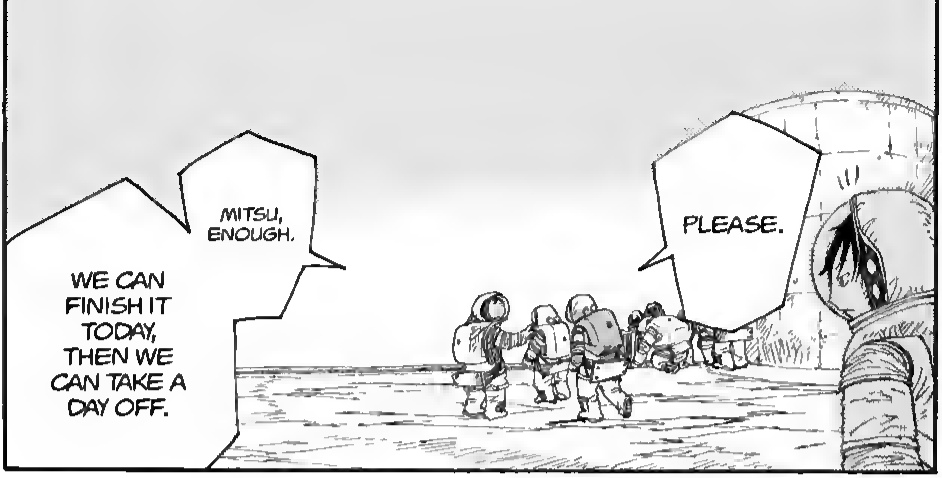

FUYU'S STAYING HOME.
TO THE HOSPITAL AND WORK.

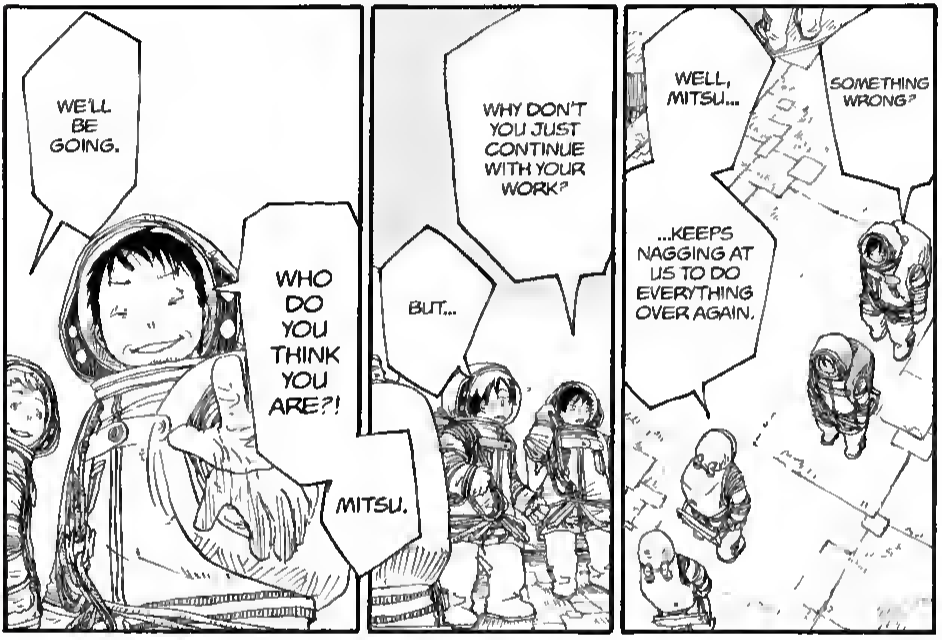

BROTHER MAKO, TELL ME A STORY.
...
SO I GOTTA DO EVERY-THING?
...PLEASE.
BROTHER MAKO, YOU WANNA PLAY?
I'LL PLAY WITH YOU.
THE HOSPI-TAL?


HOW'S IT GOING, MITSU?
PEOPLE SEEM TO BE SLACKING OFF MORE THAN USUAL....
THIS ISN'T GOOD....
WHY IS THE QUALITY OF THEIR WORK SO DIFFERENT?
BUT I CAN'T ACCEPT THEIR WORK....
PEOPLE WHO'VE SLACKED OFF WILL FINISH TOMORROW.
HE'LL FINISH IN EXACTLY THREE DAYS.
MR. YUKISHIMA'S SLOW, BUT HE'S DOING HIS WORK WELL.


SHUP
OH, MITSU?
I can't show this to Jin.
I gotta have them do things over.
Is it because they're not taking me seriously?
HMM? YOU DIDN'T DO A GOOD JOB?
UM... THE WINDOWS NEED TO BE DONE OVER AGAIN.
WE'LL TREAT YOU AFTER WORK.
YOU DON'T LOOK TOO HAPPY.
HMM?
...GOOD JOB.
YOU'RE KIDDING. COME ON.
BUT EVEN MR. YUKISHIMA DID A BETTER JOB THAN—
HA HA HA
WE GOT HALF THE WINDOWS DONE TODAY.
UH? WHAT'RE YOU SAYING?
I CANNOT ACCEPT IT. DO IT OVER AGAIN.
NO, NOT ME, BUT SOME OF YOU...


The Next Day
SO, DO YOUR BEST.
EH? YOU'RE WORKING SOMEWHERE ELSE?
WHISPER
MITSU'S IN CHARGE, HE'LL BE BETTER OFF IF I'M NOT AROUND.
WELL...
I'M BETTER OFF NOT BEING AROUND TOO.
MAKOTO, YOU'VE MELLOWED A BIT.
You never used to say things like that before
HUH?!
...
PLEASE.
DO IT OVER AGAIN.


MITSU, ENOUGH.
WE CAN FINISH IT TODAY, THEN WE CAN TAKE A DAY OFF.
PLEASE.


WE'LL BE GOING.
WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?!
MITSU.
WHY DON'T YOU JUST CONTINUE WITH YOUR WORK?
BUT...
WELL, MITSU...
SOMETHING WRONG?
...KEEPS NAGGING AT US TO DO EVERYTHING OVER AGAIN.


I...


HEEY, LET US ON THE LIFT.
SHAK
SHAK
I'M...IN CHARGE.
I FEEL SO GOOD.
TWIRRRRRRRL
WELL.
MR. YUKISHIMA! WHAT'RE YOU DOING?!
YEESS.
TWIRRRRRRRL
STOP RIGHT NOW.

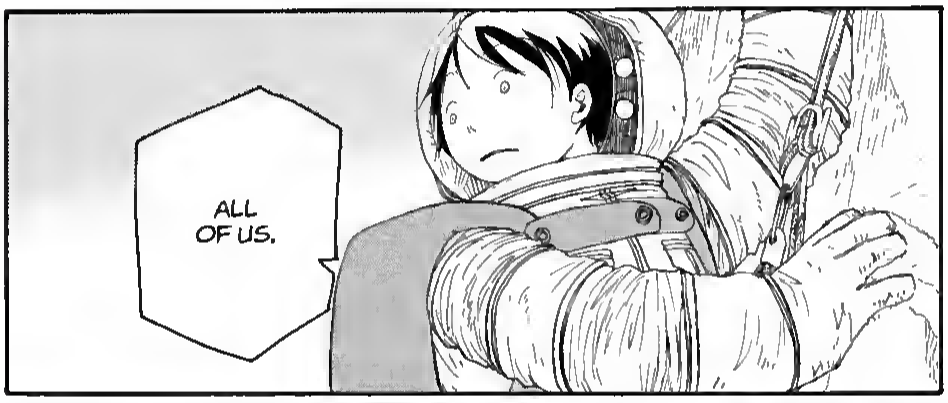
OOPS.
YO.
HO.
TUG
TUG
WAIT.
YANK
HMM?
...!
OH?


SOMETHING FELL!
THAT WAS DANGEROUS!
I-I'M SORRY.
N...
NO PROBLEM.
WE DROPPED A TOOL. I'M SORRY.
I-I'M SORRY.
HEY!
JIN THINKS MITSU'S SO GOOD.
DIDN'T THEY KNOW?
...BEFORE TELLING US HOW TO DO OURS.
YOU DO YOUR JOB PROPERLY...
CAN'T YOU EVEN TAKE CARE OF YOUR TOOLS PROPERLY?
SO IT WAS MITSU.


HEY, HEY.
YOU CAN BE IN CHARGE AFTER YOU WORK ON THE LOWER LEVELS LIKE AKI DID.
MITSU CAN'T DO IT.
EVERYBODY, I DROPPED THE TOOL.
WHY DON'T YOU GO CLEAN THE LOWER-LEVEL WINDOWS?
YOUR FATHER FELL, BUT YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO GO BACK, 'CAUSE YOU'RE IN CHARGE.
HA HA HA
YOUR TOOL MAY BE STUCK DOWN THERE TOO.

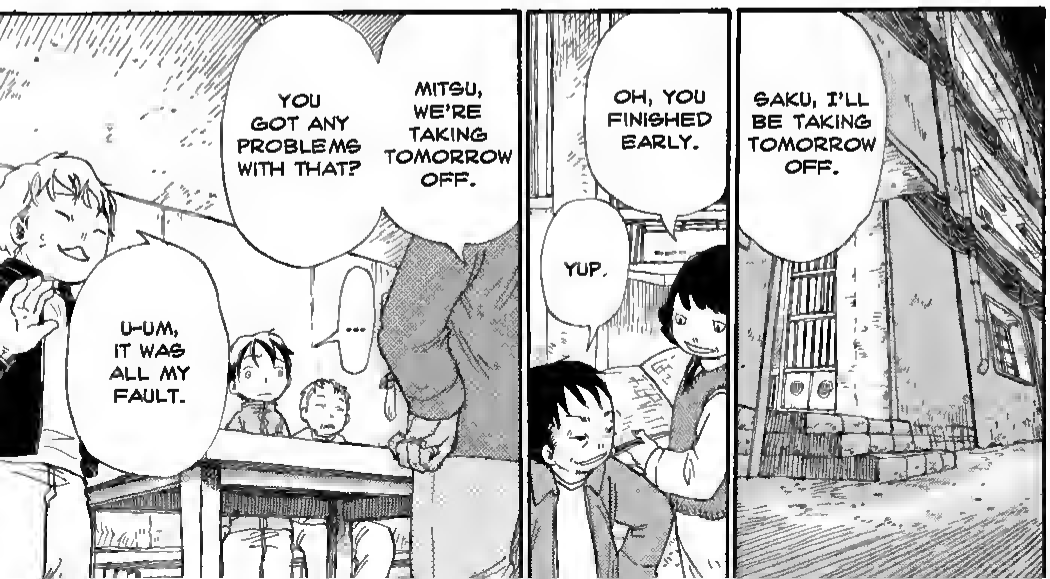

HEY, MITSU.
floor 38: under the window
YOU'RE LIKE THE POT CALLING THE KETTLE BLACK.
...YET YOU TOOK TIME OFF TO THINK THINGS OVER.
KAGEYAMA QUIT BECAUSE OF YOU...
...BUT YOU CAN'T EVEN DO YOUR JOB PROPERLY.
YOU TOLD US TO DO OUR WORK OVER...


WHY'D WE HAVE TO PUT UP WITH YOUR MOPING?
WE FILLED IN FOR YOU AND KAGEYAMA.


ALL OF US.

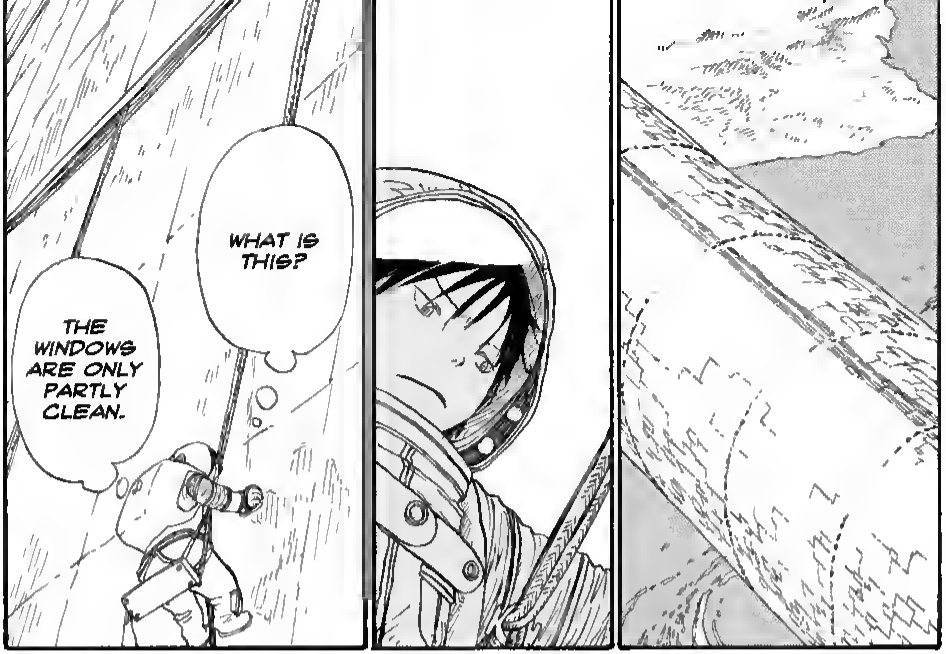

I'M SORRY...
HEY, LEADER.
DO I REALLY HAVE TO WORK UNDER YOU?

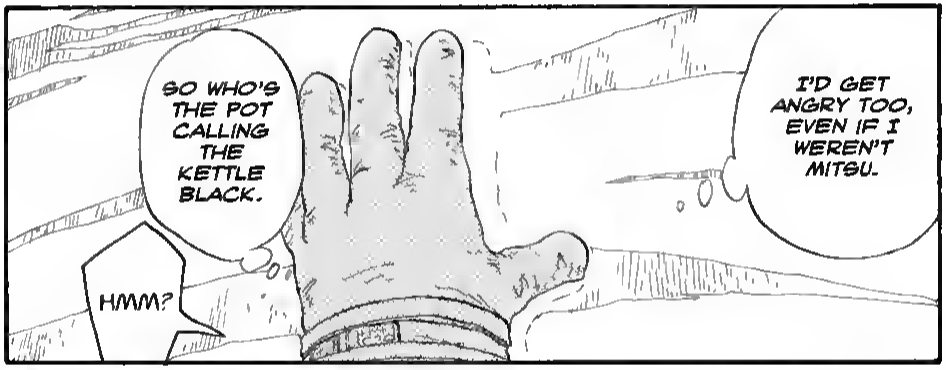

MITSU, I'M SORRY. IT'S ALL MY FAULT...
MY SHOULDER HURTS...
NO, IT'S ALL RIGHT.
GOOD, WE'RE ALL DONE.
I CAN TAKE TOMORROW OFF.
WE'VE BEEN BUSY AFTER KAGEYAMA QUIT.
I CAN FINALLY SPEND TIME WITH MY FAMILY.
AH, GOOD FOR YOU.

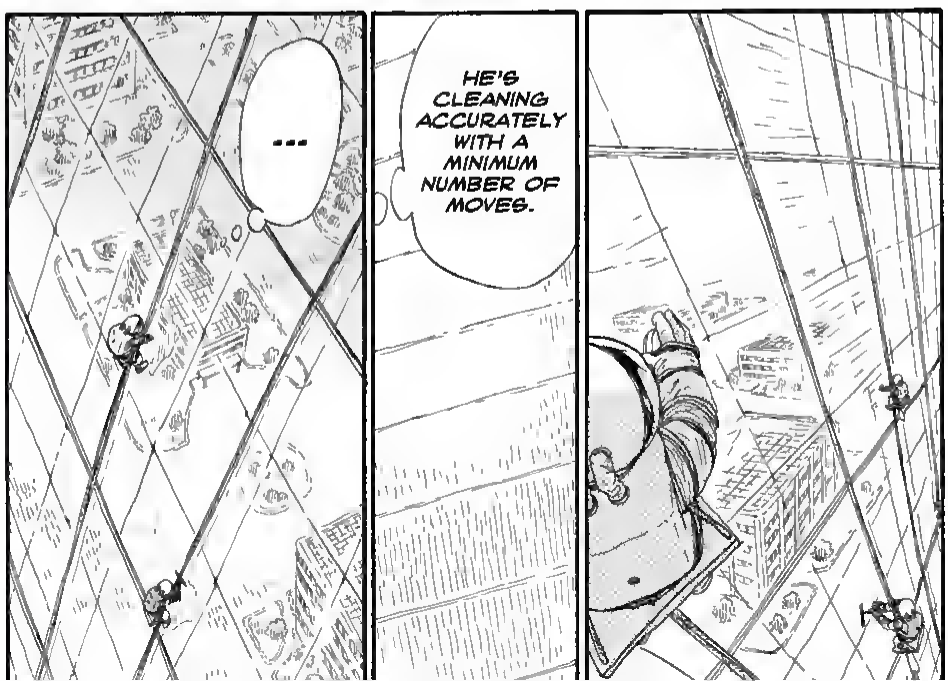

SAKU, I'LL BE TAKING TOMORROW OFF.
OH, YOU FINISHED EARLY.
YUP.
MITSU, WE'RE TAKING TOMORROW OFF.
YOU GOT ANY PROBLEMS WITH THAT?
...
U-UM, IT WAS ALL MY FAULT.

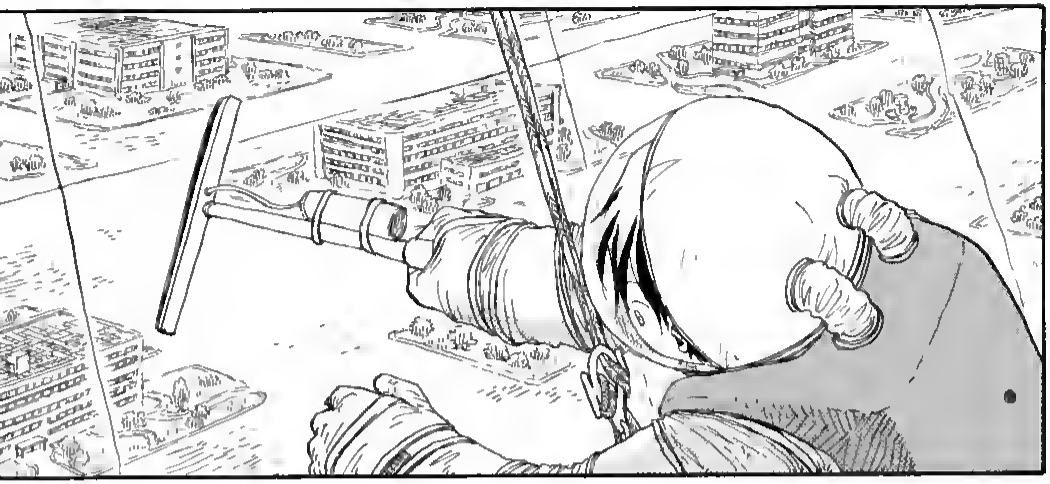

IF NOBU'S SATISFIED WITH HIS WORK, FINE.
BUT I'D DO IT OVER AGAIN...
YUKISHIMA'S GOT NOTHING TO DO WITH THIS...
...RIGHT, MITSU?
HEY.
WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?!
YOU ORDER US AROUND, BUT YOU CAN'T DO ANYTHING YOURSELF.
YOU JUST CLEAN THE LOWER-LEVEL WINDOWS LIKE YOUR FATHER DID.
I'VE BEEN PUTTING UP WITH YOU BECAUSE YOU'RE AKI'S SON...
...BUT I DON'T WANT YOU GIVING ME ORDERS.
HEY...


AND YOU'LL FALL TOO!
HEY, NOBU.
HMPH. I'M TAKING TOMORROW OFF.
SORRY...
THIS IS THE LAST TIME I'LL BE IN CHARGE.
ALL RIGHT.
WE HAVEN'T HAD ANY DAYS OFF RECENTLY.
MITSU... SORRY. I'M TAKING TOMORROW OFF TOO.


THE WINDOWS ARE ONLY PARTLY CLEAN.
WHAT IS THIS?

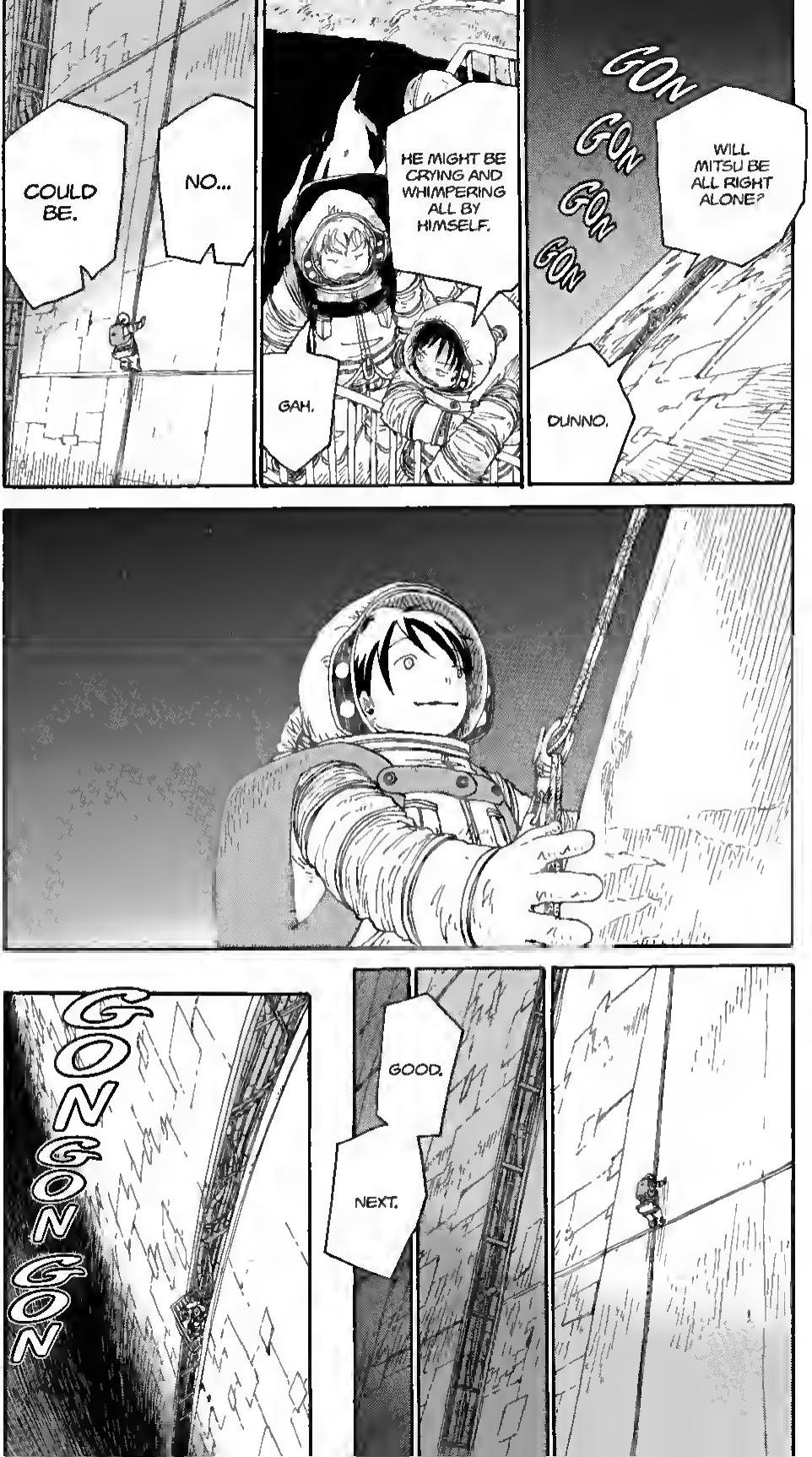

HMM?
SO WHO'S THE POT CALLING THE KETTLE BLACK.
I'D GET ANGRY TOO, EVEN IF I WEREN'T MITSU.


...
HE'S CLEANING ACCURATELY WITH A MINIMUM NUMBER OF MOVES.

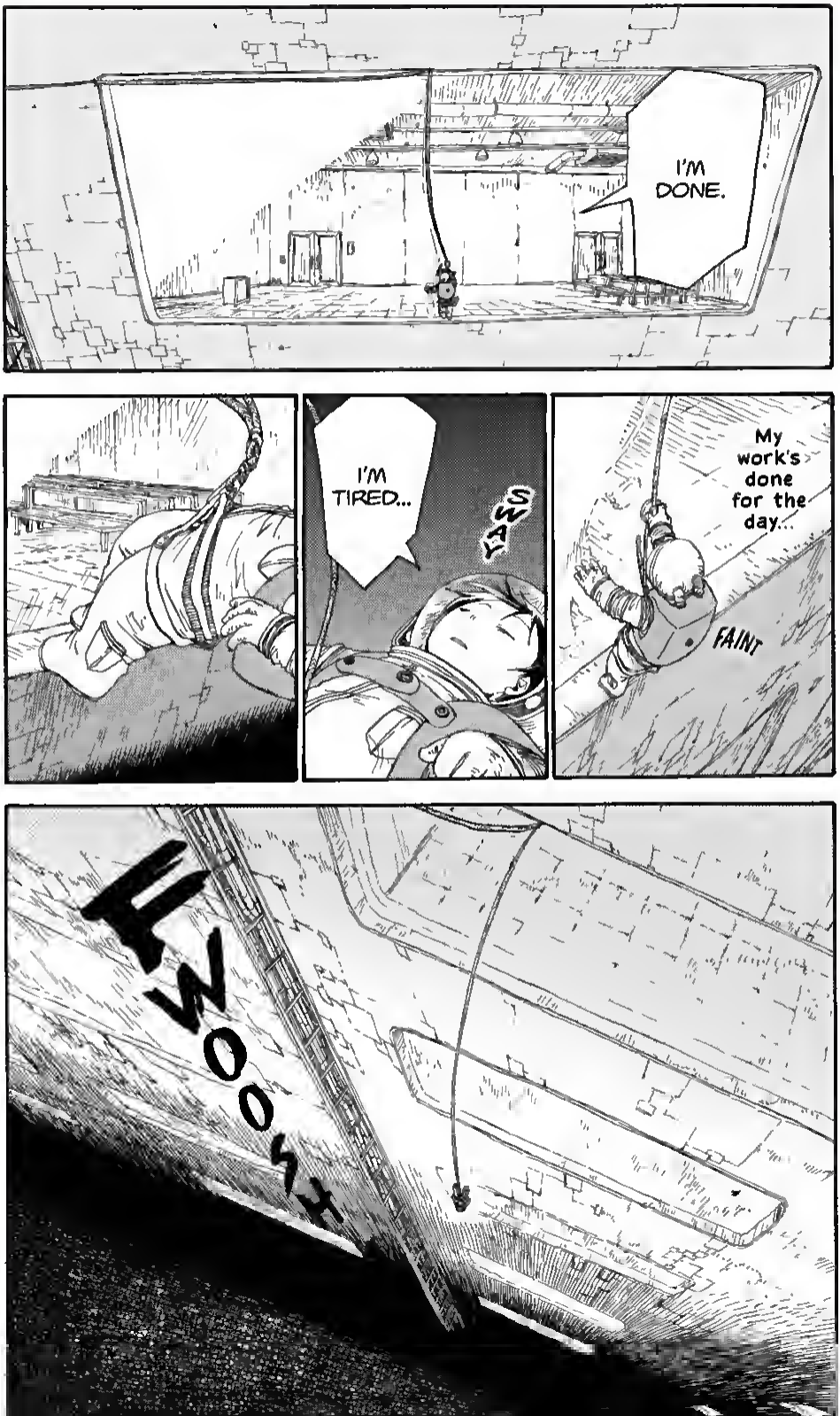



I'LL LEAVE AFTER I'VE CHECKED EVERYONE'S WORK. MR. YUKISHIMA, YOU CAN GO TOO...
...'CAUSE I MIGHT BE A LITTLE LATE.
GOOD JOB.


OTHERWISE I WON'T BE ABLE TO GET BACK.
AH, WOULD YOU SEND THE LIFT HERE?
HEY.
...
YES.
ARE YOU SURE?


COULD BE.
NO...
HE MIGHT BE CRYING AND WHIMPERING ALL BY HIMSELF.
GAH.
GON GON GON GON GON
WILL MITSU BE ALL RIGHT ALONE?
DUNNO.
GOOD.
NEXT.
GON GON GON GON


Was this window so small?
IT'S EASIER THAN BEFORE.
SHEESH...
EVEN IF I FEEL LIKE I SHOULD QUIT NOW...
...I STILL ENJOY WASHING WINDOWS.


I'M DONE.
I'M TIRED...
SWAY
My work's done for the day...
FAINT
FWOOSH


BRRING
YES, THIS IS THE GUILD.
THE TRANS-CEIVER IS OLD.
HUH? MITSU?
NO, YUKISHIMA'S HERE.
...YES.
?
NOBU, MITSU HASN'T RETURNED.
MAYBE HE WENT TO CLEAN THE LOWER-LEVEL WINDOWS?
WHAT, MAKOTO? YOU WERE COMPLAINING ABOUT MITSU TOO.
I WAS.
BUT ONE THING'S DIFFERENT.
I DON'T SLACK OFF LIKE YOU DO.
HMPH, DID HE REALLY GO?
YOU REALLY UPSET HIM.


WHIP
EVEN MITSU DOESN'T SLACK OFF LIKE YOU DO.
CRASH


I'VE BEEN WORKING WITHOUT ANY DAYS OFF.
YOU AND MITSU AREN'T THE ONLY ONES FILLING IN AFTER KAGEYAMA QUIT.
WHY DO I HAVE TO DEAL WITH PEOPLE COMPLAINING ABOUT ME, WHEN THEY'RE JUST LAZY?
WHAT?!
BE QUIET!
WE CAN'T CONTACT MITSU BY RADIO EITHER.
DID HE REALLY GO TO THE LOWER LEVELS?

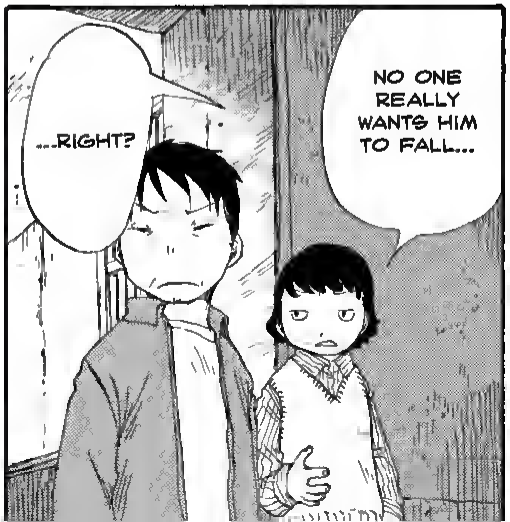

FWOOOOO
SWING
SWING

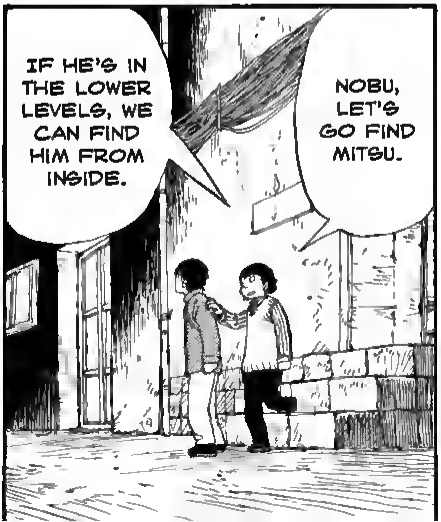

YOU'RE JUST LIKE ME.
MAKOTO.

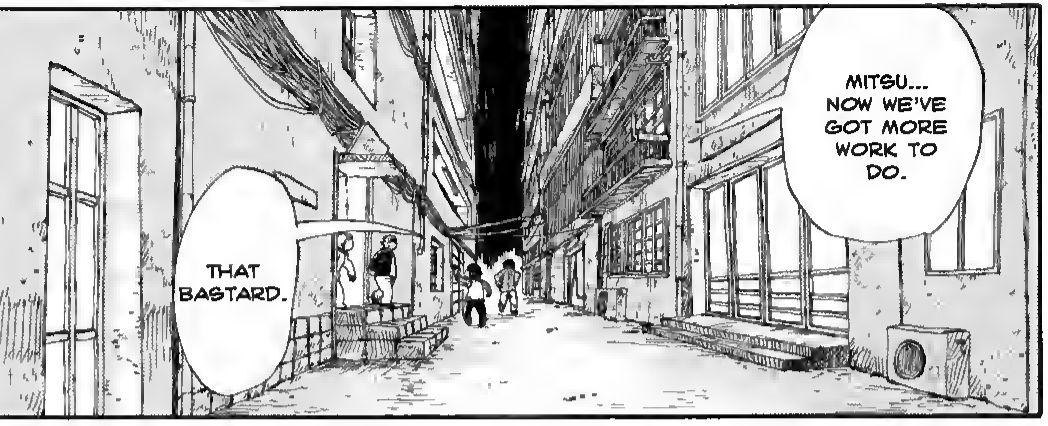

I DON'T WANNA TALK ABOUT IT NOW.


DO I...
...HAVE ENOUGH AIR LEFT?
Did I hurt them yesterday?
I've got no strength left in my arms.


DON'T BLAME EVERYTHING ON ME.
YOU TRIED TO MAKE MITSU QUIT WHEN KAGEYAMA WAS HOSPITALIZED.

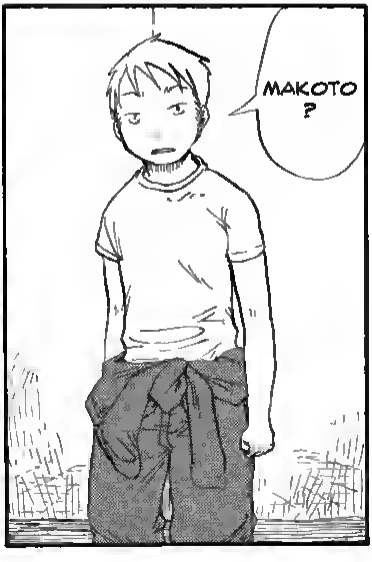

...RIGHT?
NO ONE REALLY WANTS HIM TO FALL...


IF HE'S IN THE LOWER LEVELS, WE CAN FIND HIM FROM INSIDE.
NOBU, LET'S GO FIND MITSU.


MITSU... NOW WE'VE GOT MORE WORK TO DO.
THAT BASTARD.



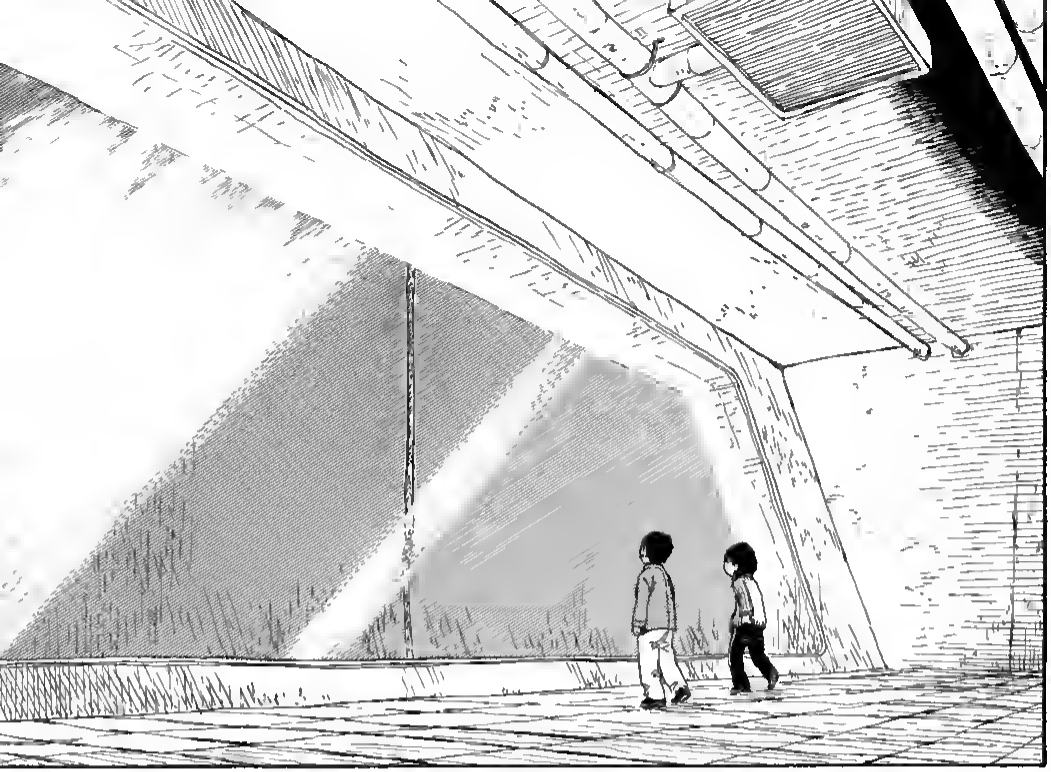

SOME-THING WRONG?
HAHH
HAHH
MITSU MIGHT BE OUTSIDE THE LOWER LEVELS.

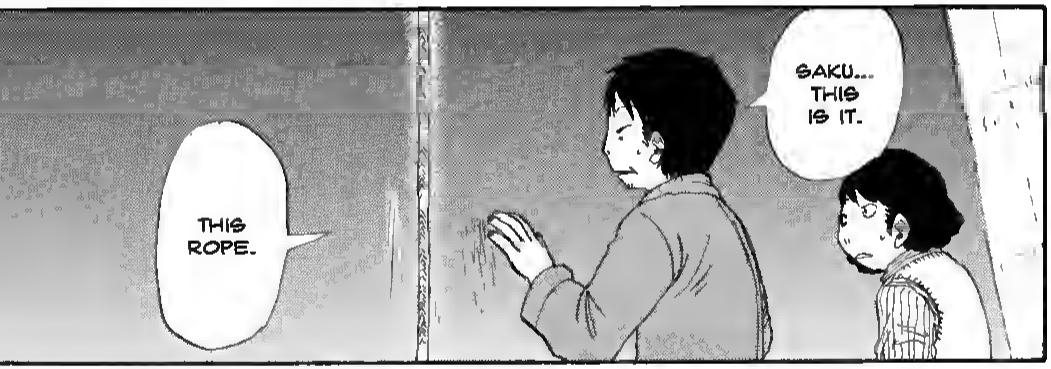

MAKOTO ?

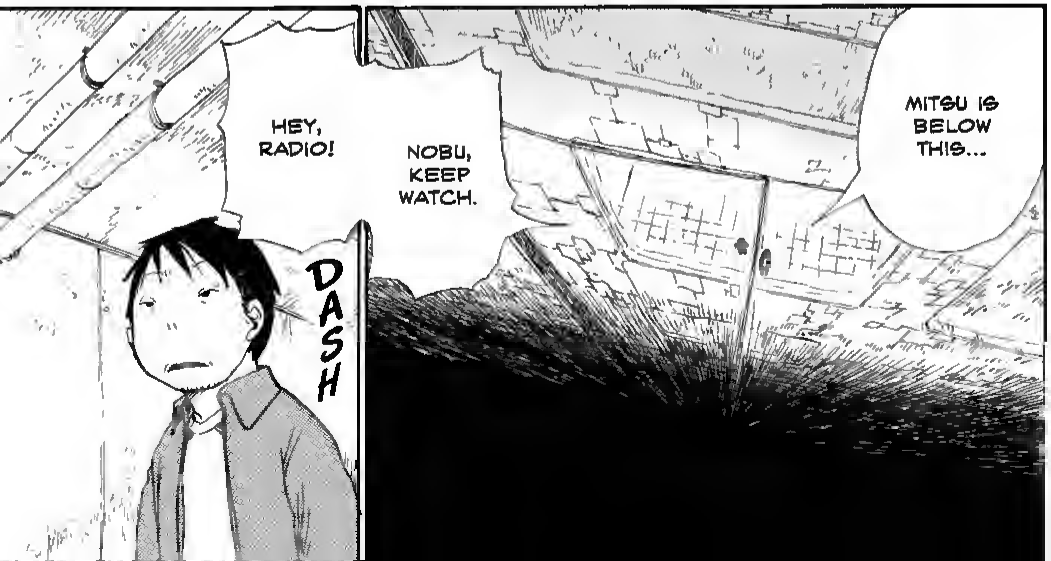

TWITCH
IS IT BECAUSE HE FELL?
WE CAN'T CONTACT MITSU BY RADIO.
DO THE RADIO WAVES REACH OUTSIDE THE LOWER LEVELS?
MAYBE RADIO WAVES CAN'T REACH HIM?
I'M ASKING YOU 'CAUSE I DON'T KNOW.
MITSU... FELL?
I GOTTA GO.
OTHER INSTRUMENTS MAY BE AFFECTED TOO...
IT'S NOT JUST RADIO WAVES.
SO WE JUST CAN'T GET IN TOUCH WITH HIM.
GOOD.
TAMACHI?
...CAN BE AFFECTED BY ELECTRO-MAGNETIC WAVES FROM THE RING SYSTEM...
THAT'S POSSIBLE... PLACES DEEP IN THE LOWER LEVELS...


HE'LL DIE IF HIS OXYGEN TANK MALFUNC-TIONS.
!
I THINK I KNOW WHERE HE IS. I GOTTA GO.
TAMACHI.
FLAP
WAIT! WHERE'RE YOU GOING? OUTSIDE?!
YOU DON'T EVEN HAVE A PASS.
YOU'RE NOT A WINDOW WASHER ANYMORE.
TELL ME WHERE YOU THINK MITSU MIGHT BE.
WE'LL FIND HIM SOME-HOW.

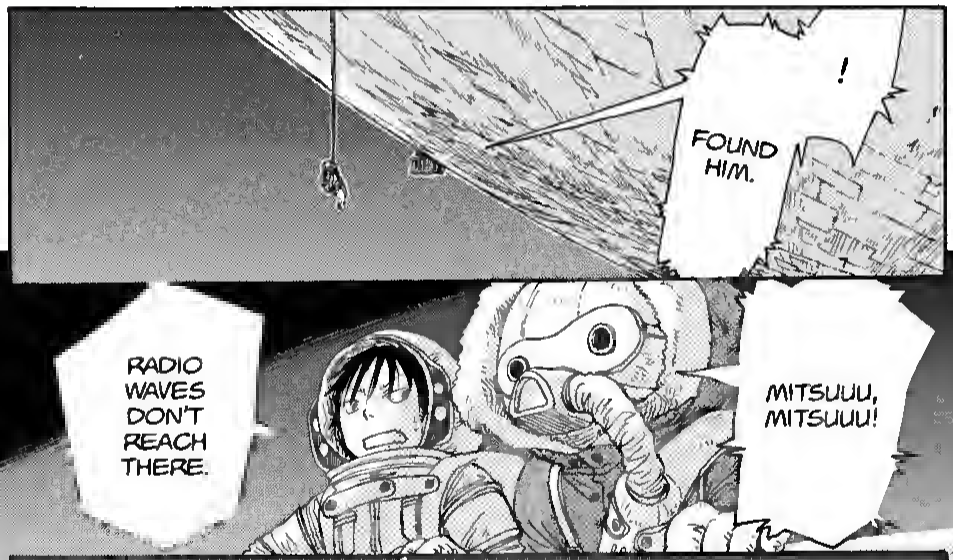

BEEP
SACHI, HELP US.
HUH?
WE'RE LOOKING FOR MITSU.
THE LOWER LEVELS, BETWEEN THE D AND C AREAS.
MAKOTO WILL JOIN YOU SOON. GET THE LIFT OUT.
HEY, I'VE NEVER BEEN TO THE LOWER LEVELS.
!
TAMACHI, GOOD YOU'RE HERE! TELL ME ANYTHING THAT MIGHT HELP.
THAT MITSU, I'M GONNA GIVE HIM A BEATING.
LOOK FOR ROOMS WITH CLEAN WINDOWS.
BANG
BANG
WHERE'S THE ROOM WE ONCE GOT A REQUEST TO CLEAN?
HERE?
RATTLE
RATTLE
BANG




SAKU... THIS IS IT.
THIS ROPE.

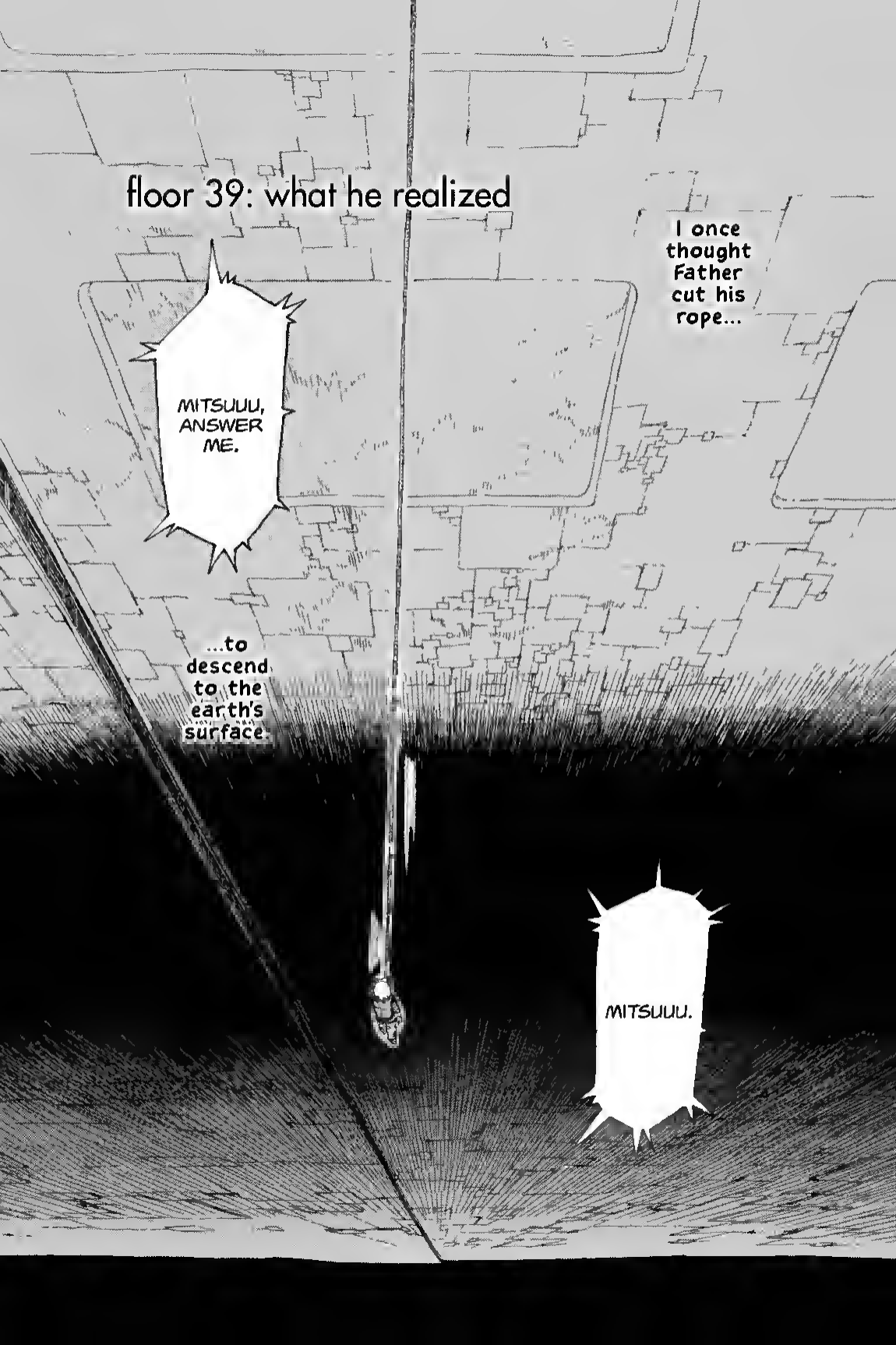

MITSU IS BELOW THIS...
NOBU, KEEP WATCH.
HEY, RADIO!
DASH

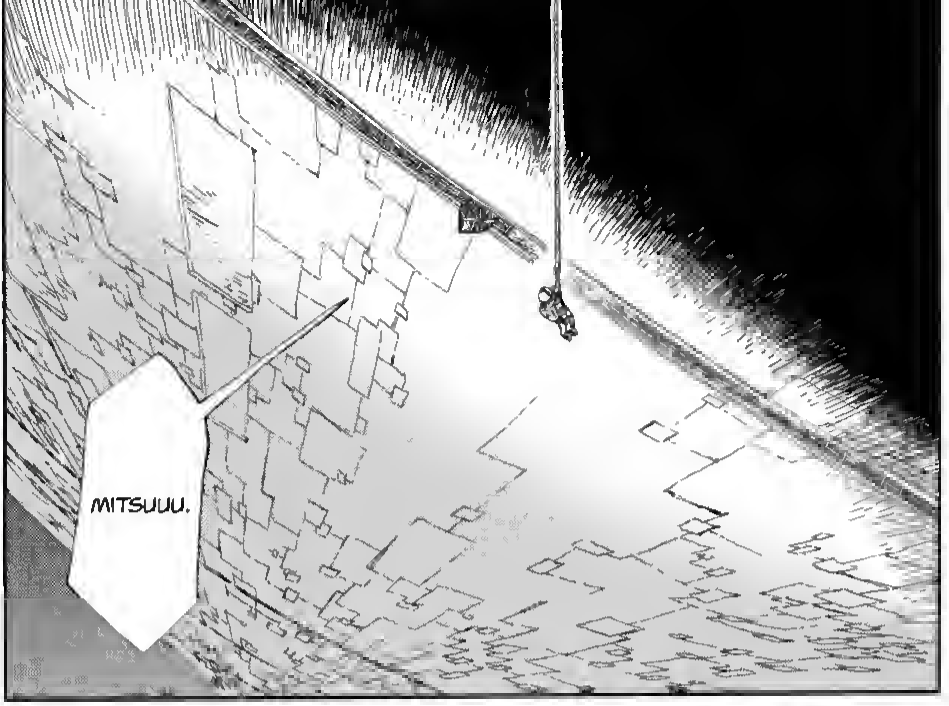

MITSU...
THIS HAS GOT TO BE A JOKE...

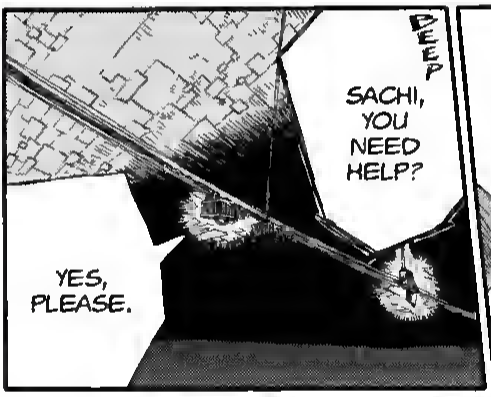

!
FOUND HIM.

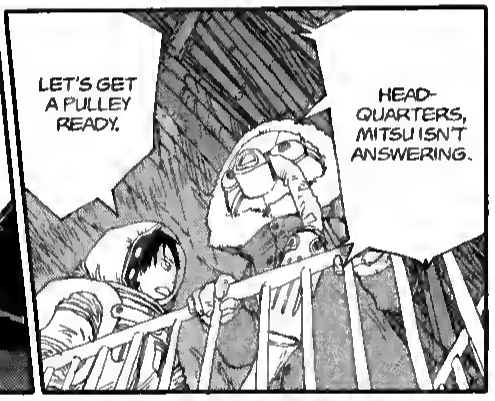
RADIO WAVES DON'T REACH THERE.
MITSUUU, MITSUUU!




floor 39: what he realized
I once thought Father cut his rope...
MITSUUU, ANSWER ME.
...to descend to the earth's surface.
MITSUUU.


MITSUUU.

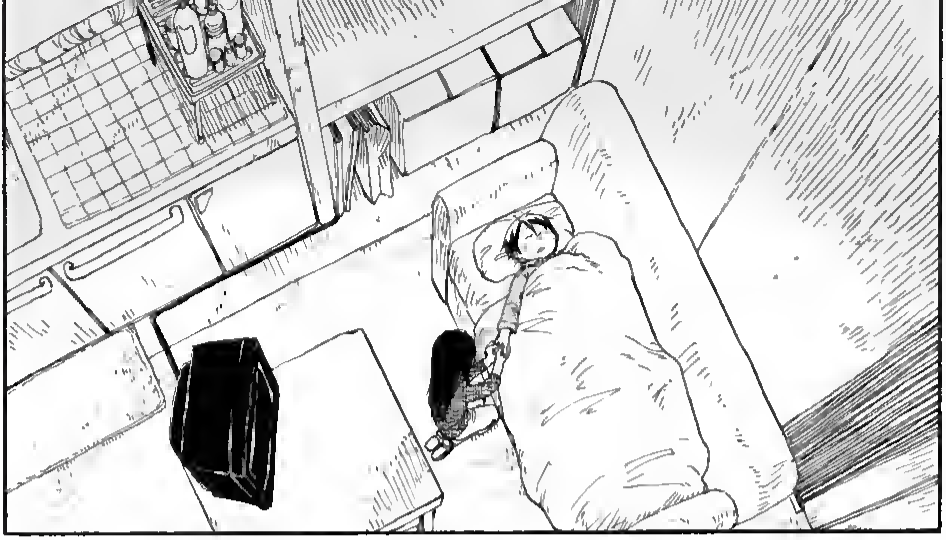

BEEP
SACHI, YOU NEED HELP?
YES, PLEASE.


HEAD-QUARTERS, MITSU ISN'T ANSWERING.
LET'S GET A PULLEY READY.

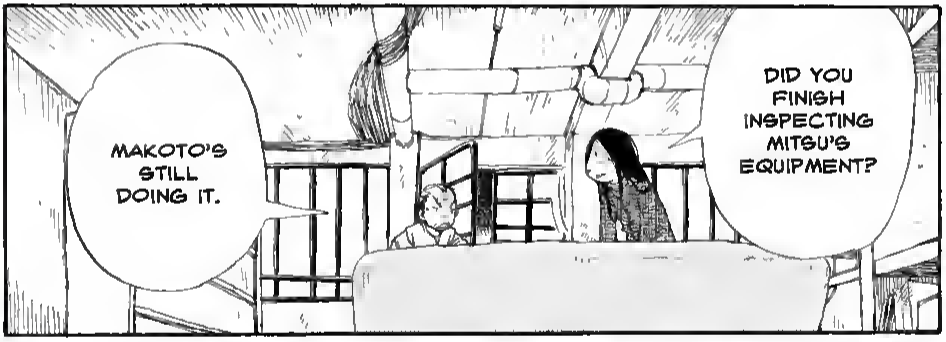

HOW'S MITSU?
HE'S NOT MOVING? YOU SURE?
KATTE

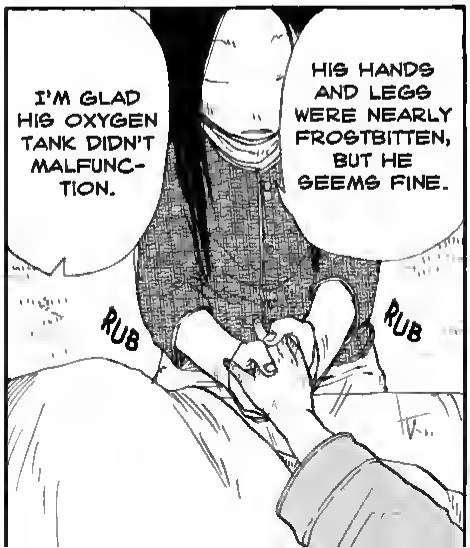

YO.
YOU FOUND HIM?

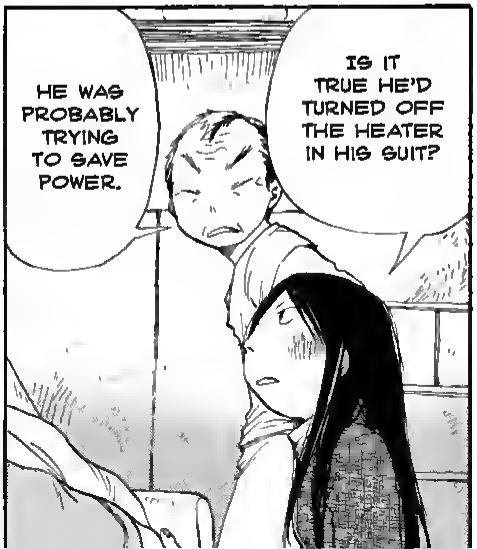

WHAAA?!
HE'S... ASLEEP?
HMM?
WE PULLED HIM UP.
MUMBLE
I DIDN'T DO ANY-THING...
TAMACHI, THANKS FOR YOUR HELP.
I'LL GO UP FOR A SEC.
...
THAT IDIOT'S ALIVE.
DING

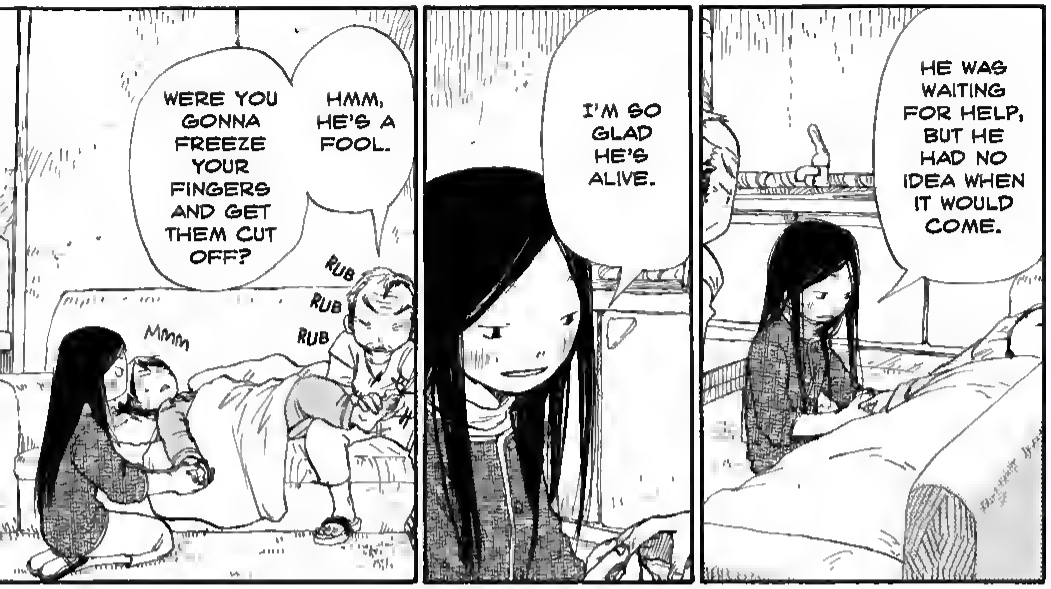


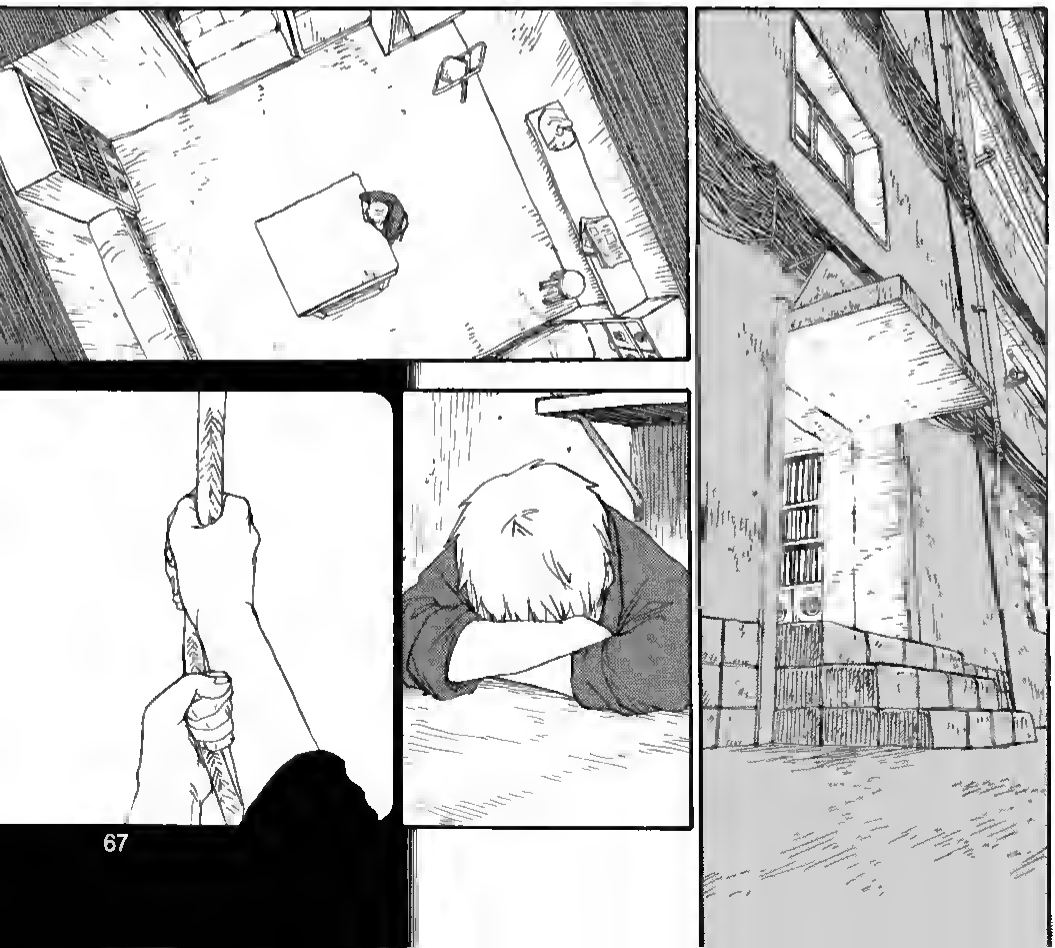


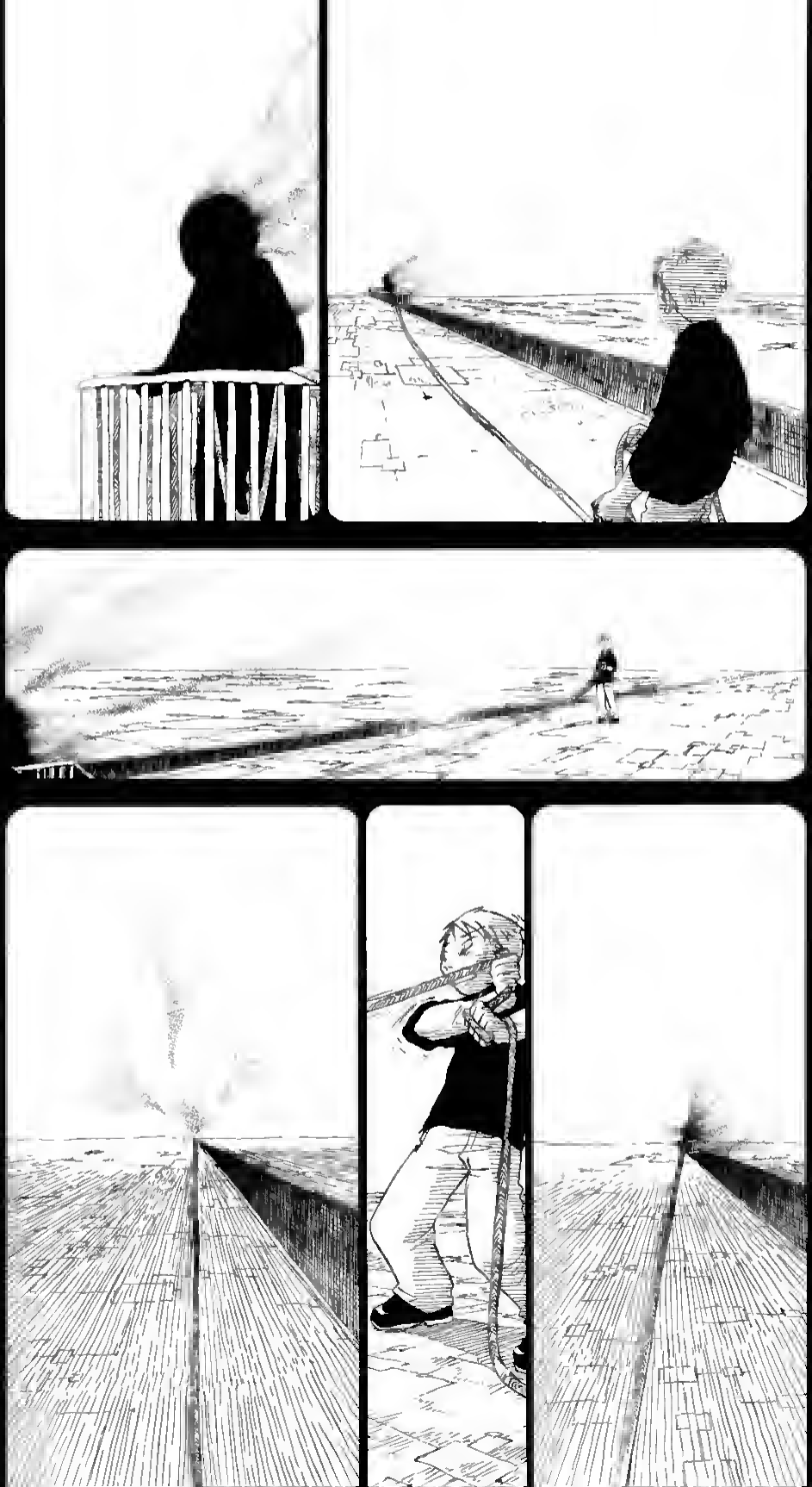

MAKOTO'S STILL DOING IT.
DID YOU FINISH INSPECTING MITSU'S EQUIPMENT?


I'M GLAD HIS OXYGEN TANK DIDN'T MALFUNC-TION.
HIS HANDS AND LEGS WERE NEARLY FROSTBITTEN, BUT HE SEEMS FINE.
RUB
RUB

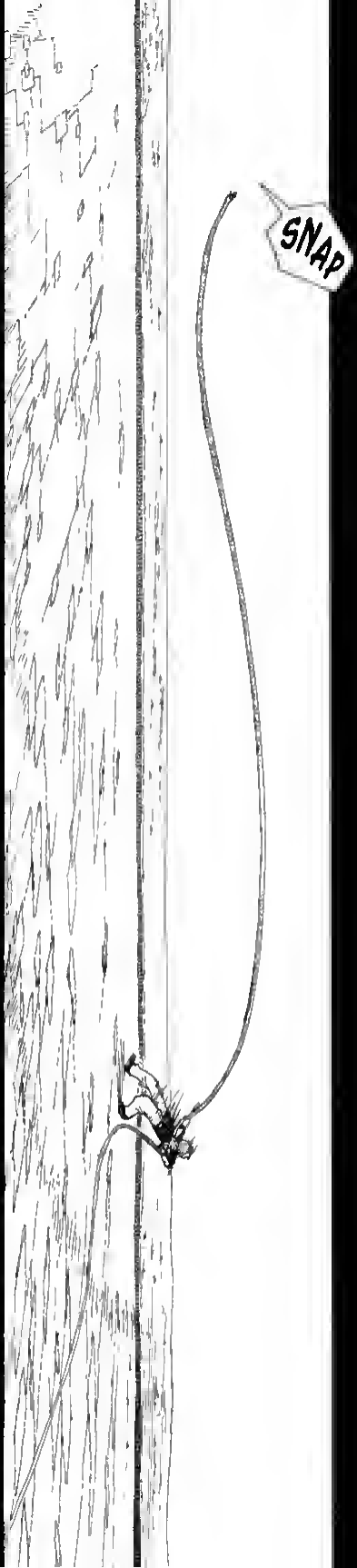

HE WAS PROBABLY TRYING TO SAVE POWER.
IS IT TRUE HE'D TURNED OFF THE HEATER IN HIS SUIT?


WERE YOU GONNA FREEZE YOUR FINGERS AND GET THEM CUT OFF?
HMM, HE'S A FOOL.
RUB
RUB
RUB
Mmm
I'M SO GLAD HE'S ALIVE.
HE WAS WAITING FOR HELP, BUT HE HAD NO IDEA WHEN IT WOULD COME.






AH
MURMUR
THE VOICE RECORDER SHOULD BE FINE.
SO WE HAVE HIS VOICE FILE?
THANKS.
SO YOU GAVE US INFORMATION ABOUT THE LOWER LEVELS.
HMM? TAMACHI?


SNAP

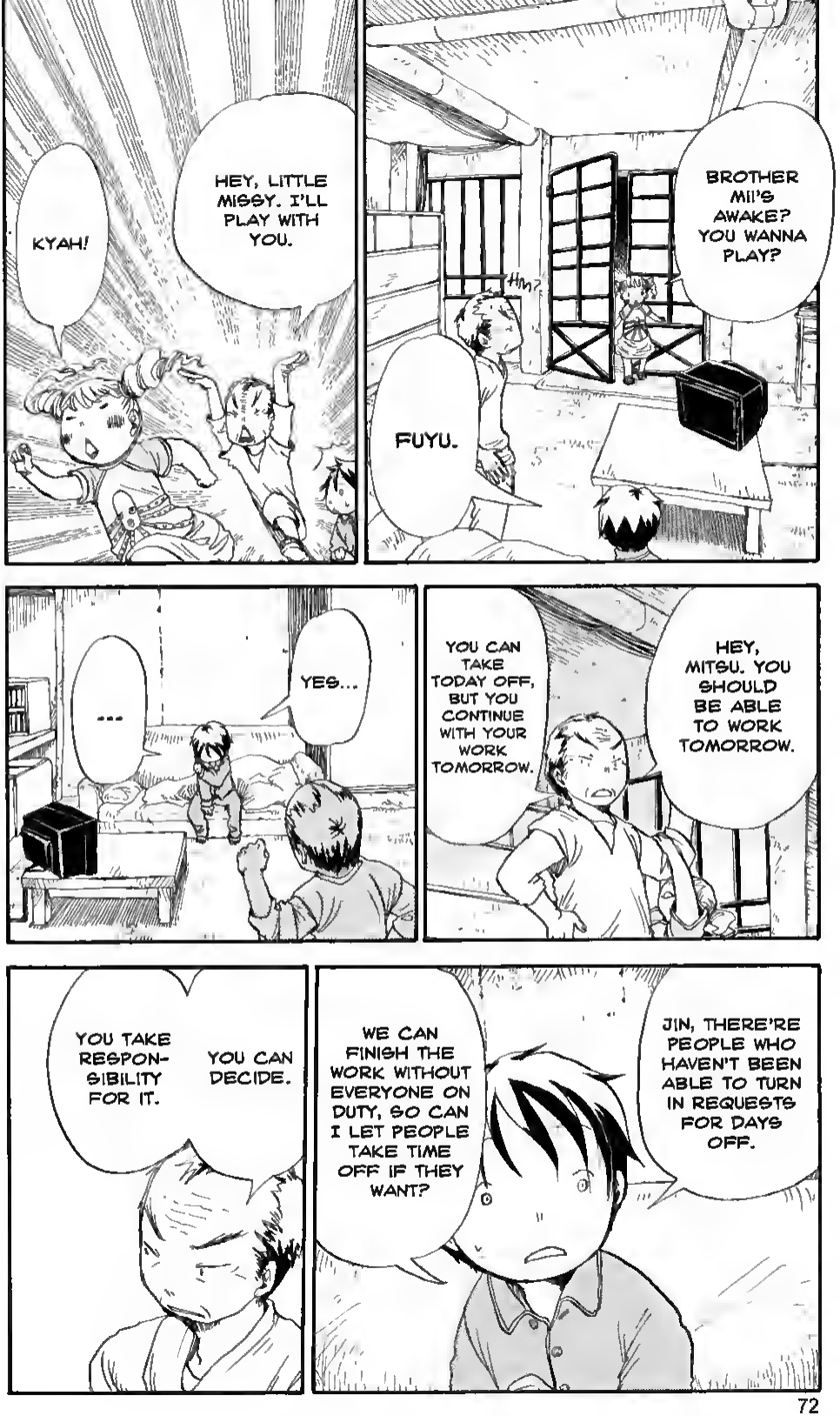



...
SURE.

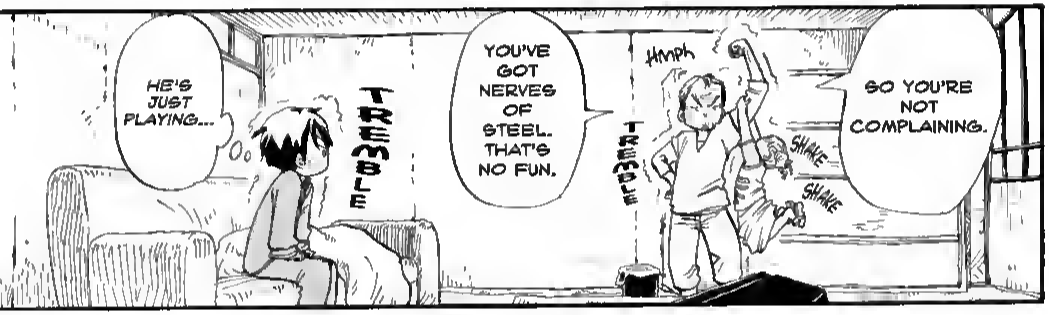

A warm and soft hand...

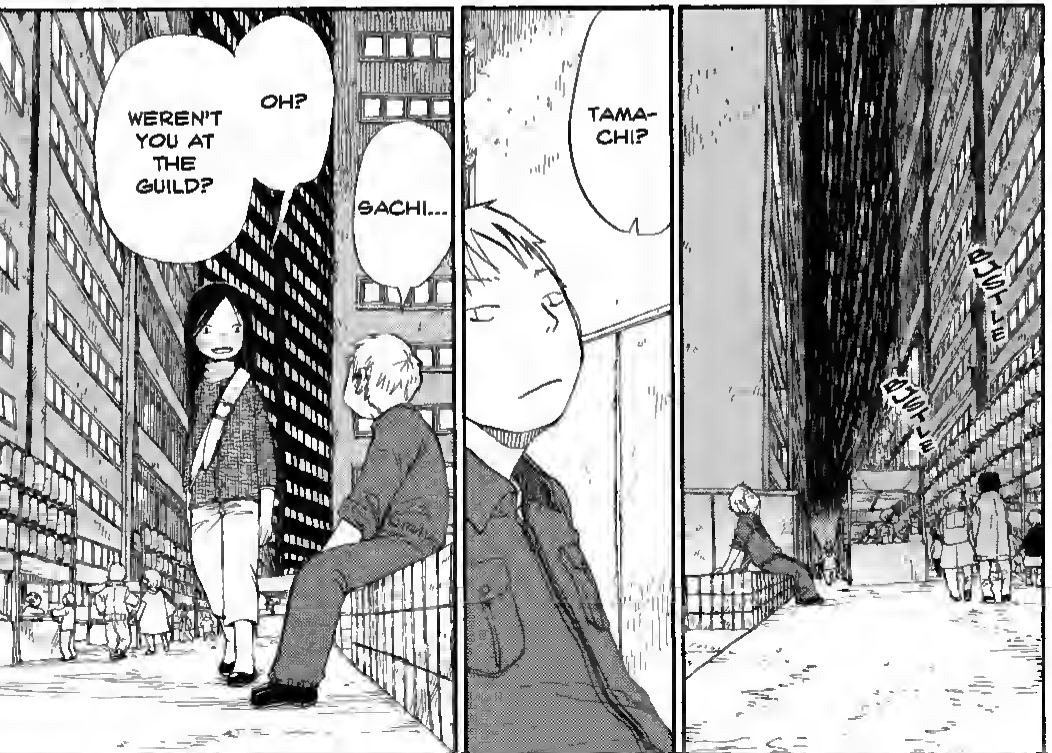

AH, HEY, WAIT...
...TAMACHI.


WOOOZ
...
RUB
RUB
WELL, YEAH.
SO YOU'VE BEEN MASSAGING MY HAND?
JIN, THANK YOU.
WHOA.
SIGH
RUB
RUB
TWELVE HOURS.
HOW LONG WAS I ASLEEP?
GAH.
OH REALLY...
...SWITCHED OUT WITH SACHI.
ACTUALLY, I JUST...


KYAH!
HEY, LITTLE MISSY. I'LL PLAY WITH YOU.
FUYU.
Hm?
BROTHER MII'S AWAKE? YOU WANNA PLAY?
...
YES...
YOU CAN TAKE TODAY OFF, BUT YOU CONTINUE WITH YOUR WORK TOMORROW.
HEY, MITSU. YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO WORK TOMORROW.
YOU TAKE RESPON-SIBILITY FOR IT.
YOU CAN DECIDE.
WE CAN FINISH THE WORK WITHOUT EVERYONE ON DUTY, SO CAN I LET PEOPLE TAKE TIME OFF IF THEY WANT?
JIN, THERE'RE PEOPLE WHO HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO TURN IN REQUESTS FOR DAYS OFF.


...
I WILL.


SO YOU'RE NOT COMPLAINING.
Hmph
SHAKE
SHAKE
YOU'VE GOT NERVES OF STEEL. THAT'S NO FUN.
TREMBLE
HE'S JUST PLAYING...
TREMBLE

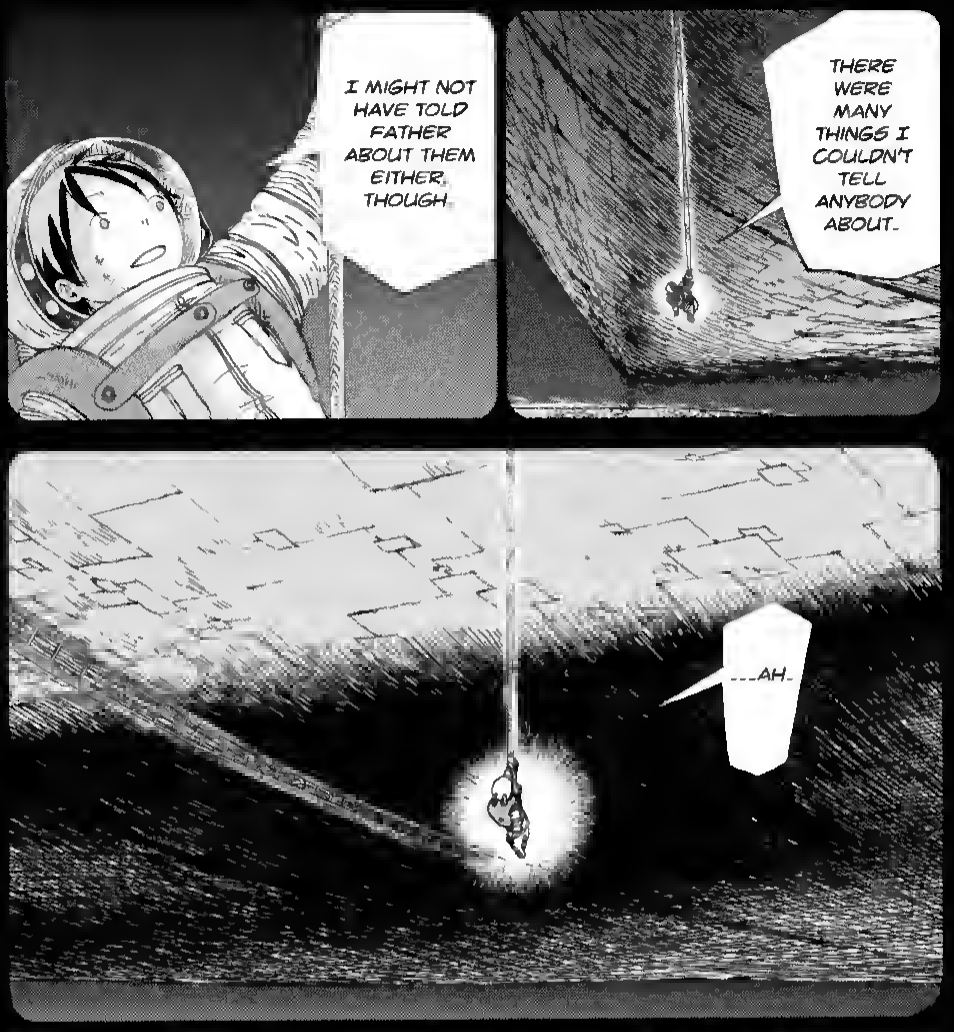

OH?
WEREN'T YOU AT THE GUILD?
SACHI...
TAMA-CHI?
BUSTLE
BUSTLE


HEY.
HAS ANYTHING CHANGED OUTSIDE THE WINDOWS?
HOW'S MITSU?
HMM? I THINK HE'S ALL RIGHT NOW.
Can I sit here?
TAMACHI'S NOT THERE.
YES, IT HAS.
WHAT, YOU WANNA TELL ME SOME-THING?
YES... YES, OF COURSE.
OF COURSE, THINGS WOULD CHANGE.
AKI AND KAGEYAMA AREN'T THERE EITHER.
THEY'VE HIRED NEW PEOPLE.

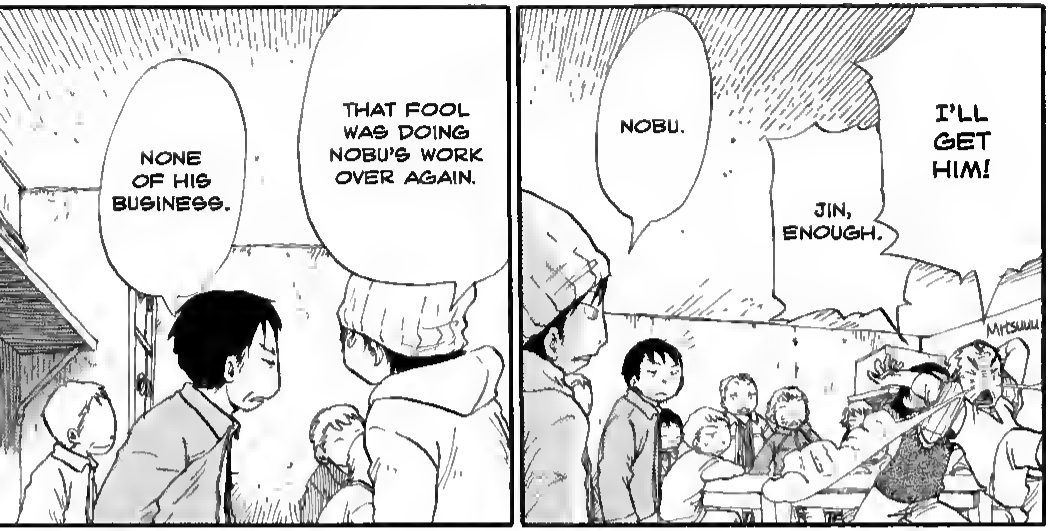

YOU LIKED AKI.
EFFT
WHAT'RE YOU SAYING?
EVERYONE IN THE GUILD DID.
THAT'S WHAT YOU MEANT?!
I WANT TO ASK YOU, SINCE YOU'RE OUTSIDE A BIT.
A BIT?
IF I... RETURN...
WHA?
YOU'RE COMING BACK?!
...
SORRY.

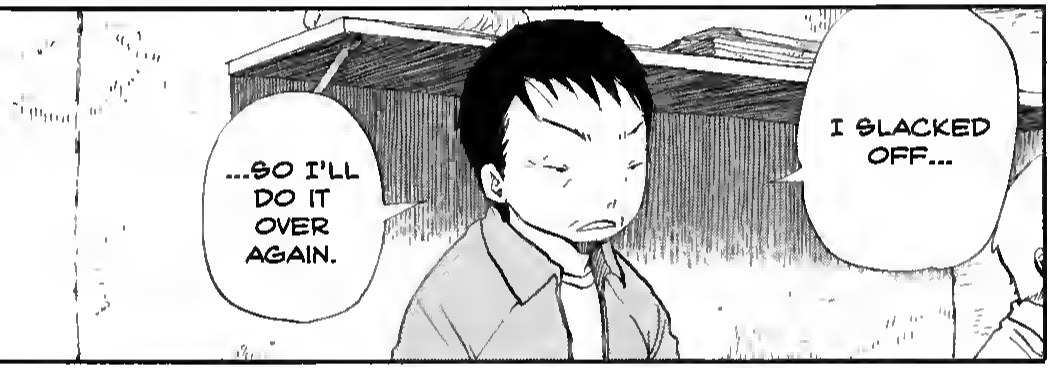

BUT...
I...OFTEN HAVE DREAMS WHERE I SEE A ROPE SNAPPING.
...I CAN'T SEE AKI.
THAT'S WHY...
...I SHOULDN'T GO BACK TO WASHING WINDOWS.
UH...
SOME-BODY...
...TO THE VOICE RECORDER ...
...THAT WAS ATTACHED TO MITSU'S BACK-PACK.
TO VERIFY THE ACCIDENT, WE'LL LISTEN...


I MUST APOLOGIZE TO NOBU.
I DIDN'T THINK ABOUT HOW HE WAS FEELING.
I WAS RUNNING AFTER FATHER.
...
FATHER.
I'D LIKE TO SEE EVERYONE AGAIN... SACHI TOO.


I MIGHT NOT HAVE TOLD FATHER ABOUT THEM EITHER, THOUGH.
THERE WERE MANY THINGS I COULDN'T TELL ANYBODY ABOUT.
...AH.


AND HE CAUSED SO MUCH TROUBLE FOR EVERYONE!
THAT IDIOT! HOW COULD HE?!
Yeah
Yeah
Yeah
CLICK
I GOTTA EAT THEM SOON—
THERE'RE FRESH EGGS IN THE FRIDGE.
TWITCH


NONE OF HIS BUSINESS.
THAT FOOL WAS DOING NOBU'S WORK OVER AGAIN.
NOBU.
JIN, ENOUGH.
I'LL GET HIM!
Mitsuru

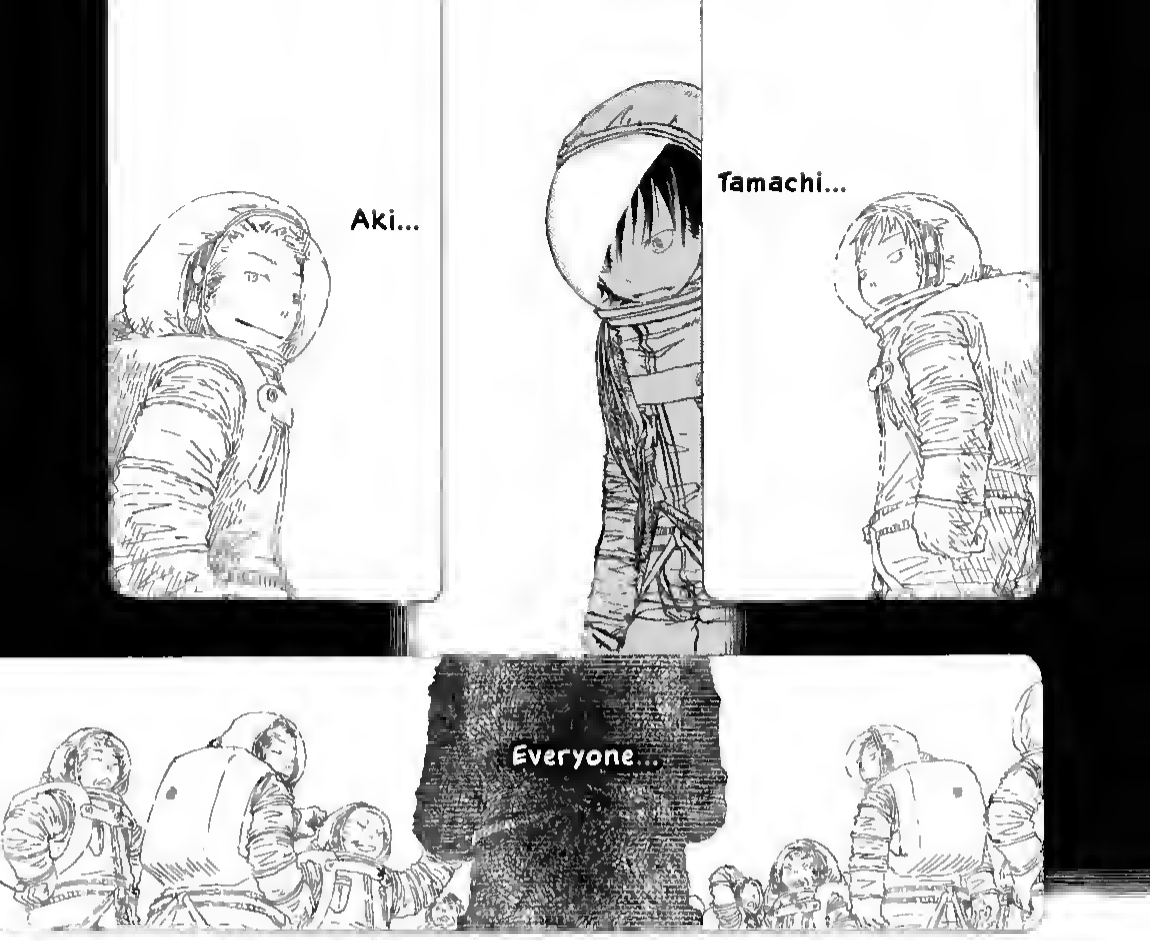

...SO I'LL DO IT OVER AGAIN.
I SLACKED OFF...

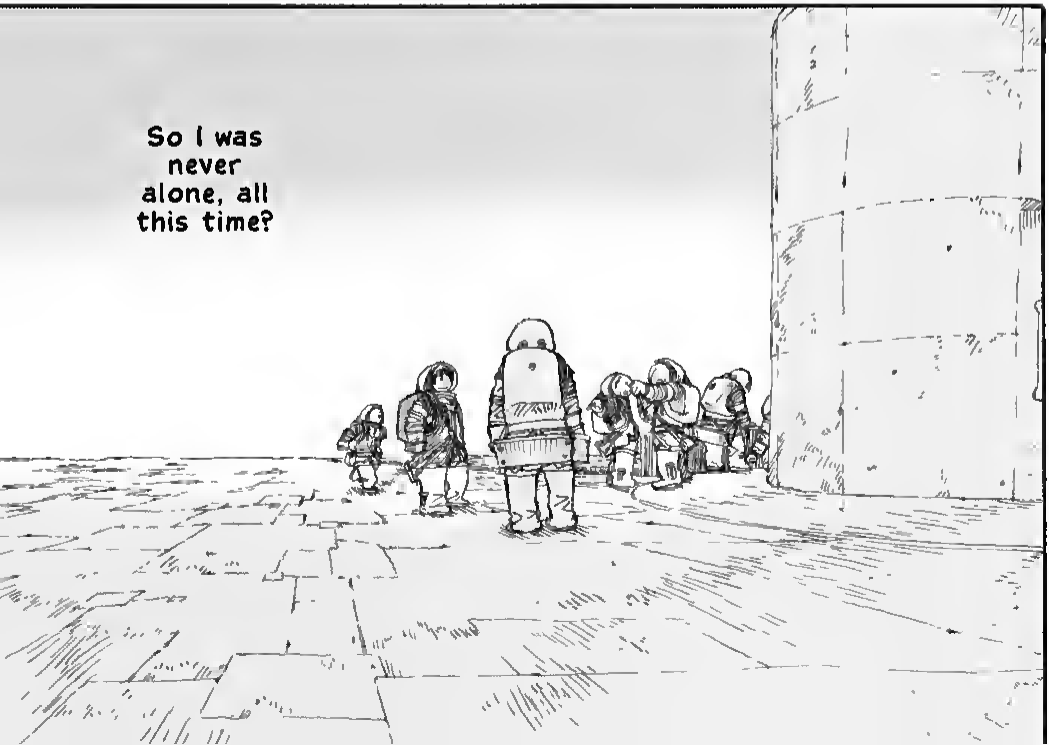

NOPE.
AND DON'T LAUGH.
DON'T TELL ANYBODY.
OH? YOU GONNA GO NOW?


EXCUSE ME FOR YESTERDAY.
WE NEEDED AN EXTRA DAY...
...BUT LET US FINISH THE MIDDLE-LEVEL WINDOWS.
DON'T LOOK SO WORRIED, YOU BUSYBODY!
...
I WILL AFTER I'M DONE.
NOBU, YOU REALLY DON'T NEED TO TAKE THE DAY OFF?
YOU READY, MAKOTO?
...from the very beginning...
MITSU'S BEEN WORKING CONSCIENTIOUSLY...


HEY, MITSU.
...
WHEN YOU WERE HANGING IN THE LOWER LEVELS...
...WEREN'T YOU THINKING "WHY ME?"
...AND "I'M GONNA QUIT"?
YES.
WHEN...I WAS WORKING I THOUGHT ABOUT IT A LITTLE
IT WAS SO FUN...
BUT IT FELT SO GOOD TO SEE THE WINDOWS GETTING CLEAN.
THAT I'D QUIT.

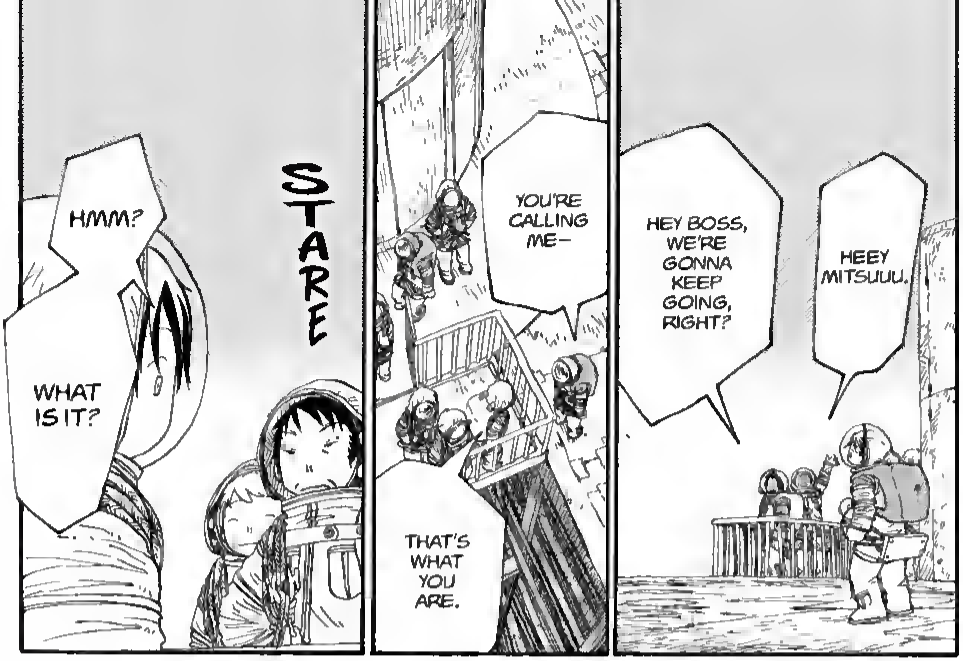

SO WHEN I LOST MY FOOTING AND WAS HANGING, I WAS THINKING ABOUT SOMETHING ELSE.
ABOUT HOW EVERYONE TRIED SO HARD TO FIND FATHER.
AND THAT EVERYTHING WOULD BE FINE IF I WAS ALIVE, INSTEAD OF THINKING THAT I MIGHT DIE.
BUT YOU'D HAVE DIED IF YOU'D KEPT SLEEPING.
UH...
...YOU'RE RIGHT.
ZOOOO
BUT EVERYONE WILL GO RESCUE SOMEONE IF THERE'S AN ACCIDENT.
WHETHER IT'S FATHER, ME, OR MAKOTO...
...'CAUSE WE ALL WORK TOGETHER.
What's with him...?

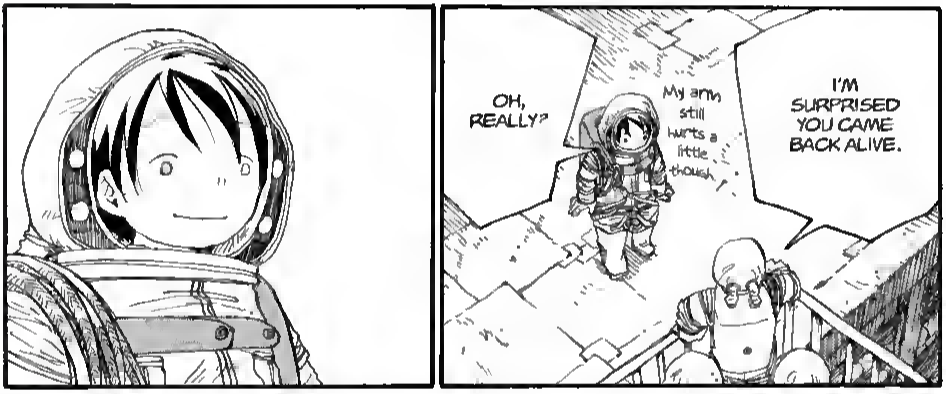

Aki...
Tamachi...
Everyone...

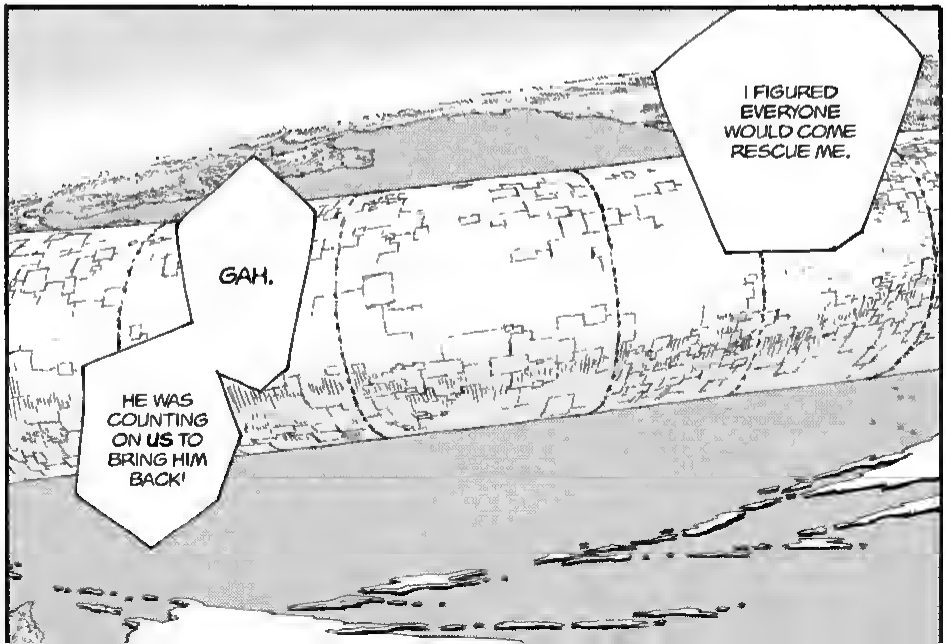

So I was never alone, all this time?


I shut myself in a shell...
...after Aki was gone...
MITSU.


I'LL ACCEPT YOU.
WHA?
MAKOTO?!
THOUGH I STILL HATE YOUR GUTS.


HEEY MITSUUU.
HEY BOSS, WE'RE GONNA KEEP GOING, RIGHT?
YOU'RE CALLING ME—
THAT'S WHAT YOU ARE.
STARE
HMM?
WHAT IS IT?


I'M SURPRISED YOU CAME BACK ALIVE.
My arm still hurts a little though.
OH, REALLY?

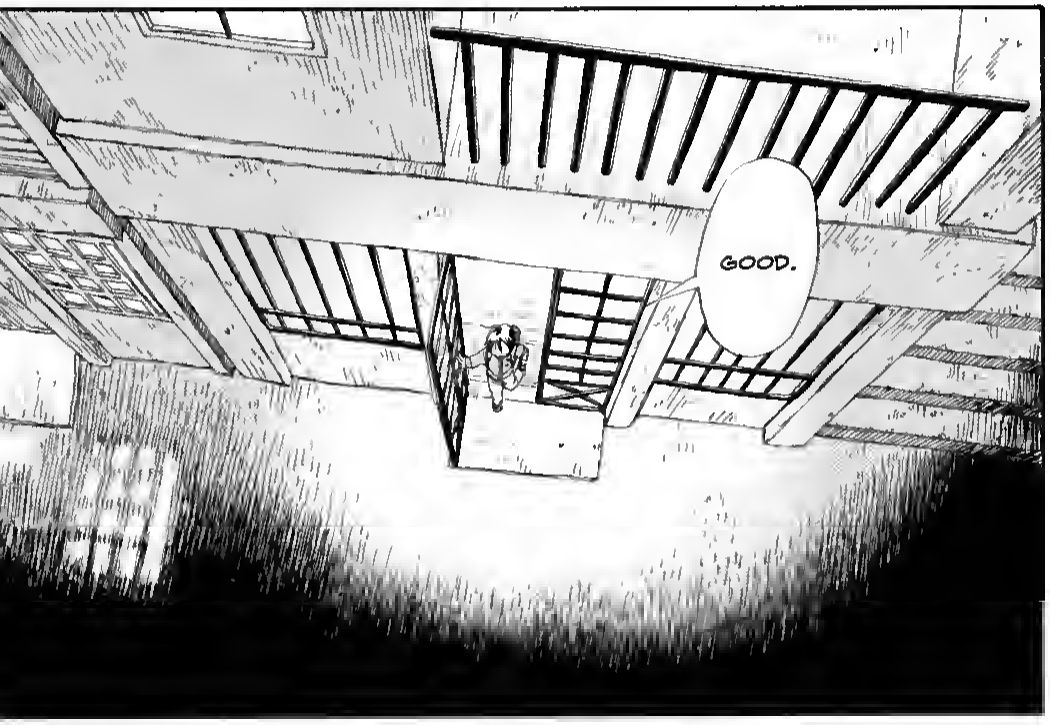

I FIGURED EVERYONE WOULD COME RESCUE ME.
GAH.
HE WAS COUNTING ON US TO BRING HIM BACK!



floor 40: a t-shirt and a resolution

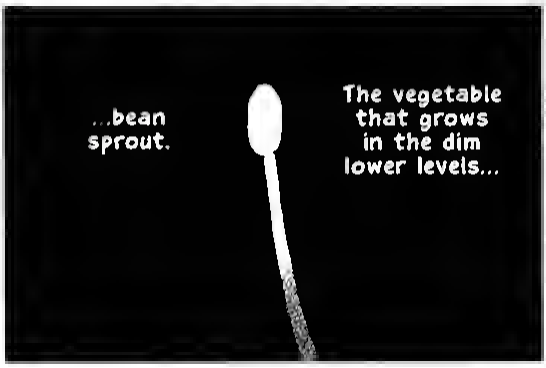

KAYO, YOU'RE WORKING AT THE STALL. SORRY I CAN'T HELP YOU.
DON'T WORRY.
YEAH, I'M LEAVING 'CAUSE I'VE GOT THE DAY OFF.
OH? DON'T YOU HAVE TODAY OFF?
SILENCE
WHEN ARE YOU COMING HOME?
UH...
TODAY...
SHEESH ...


THE MATERIALS... I CAN START MOVING IF I HAVE A PILOT.
hahh
hahh
PARTS FOR THE DESCENT DEVICE, ASSEMBLY AND PRODUCTION.

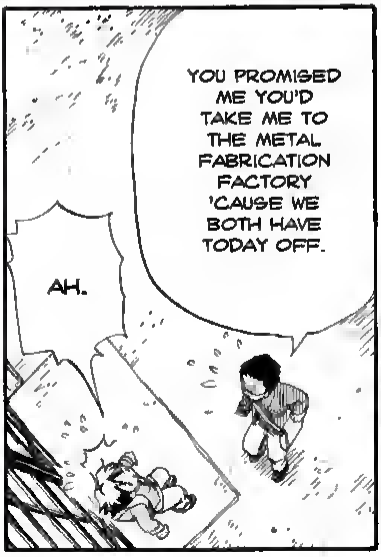

GOOD.



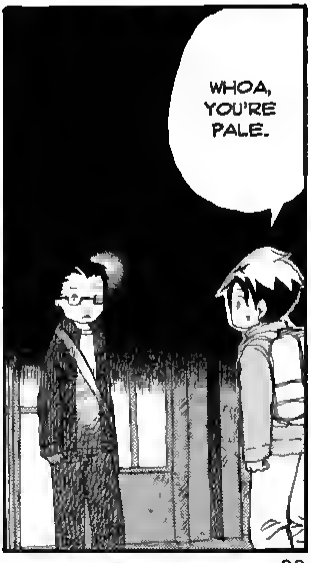

MY ARM'S GETTING BETTER...
...I'LL BUY LOTS OF STUFF TODAY.

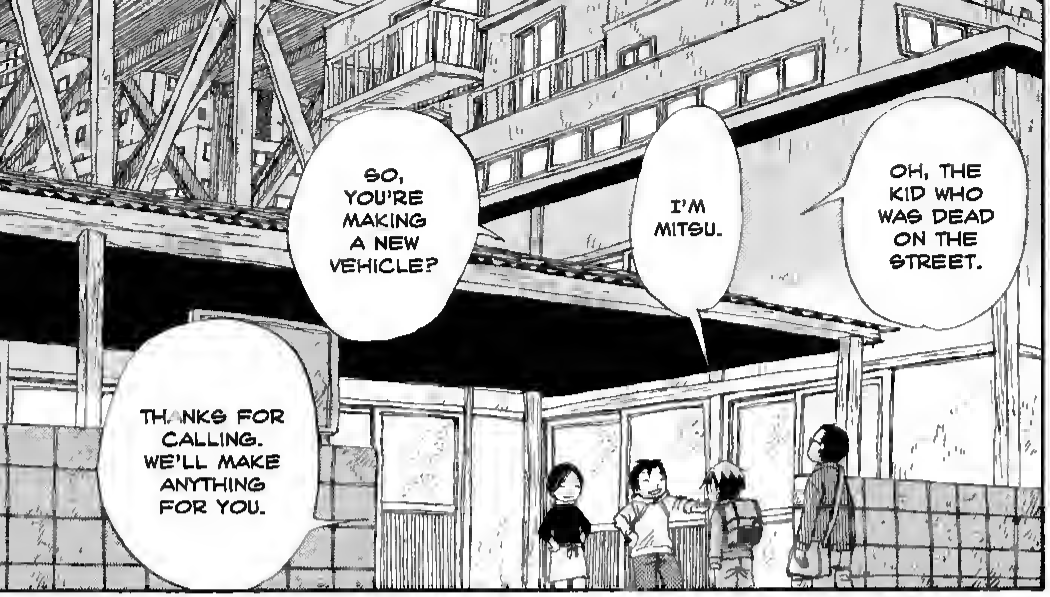

The vegetable that grows in the dim lower levels...
...bean sprout.

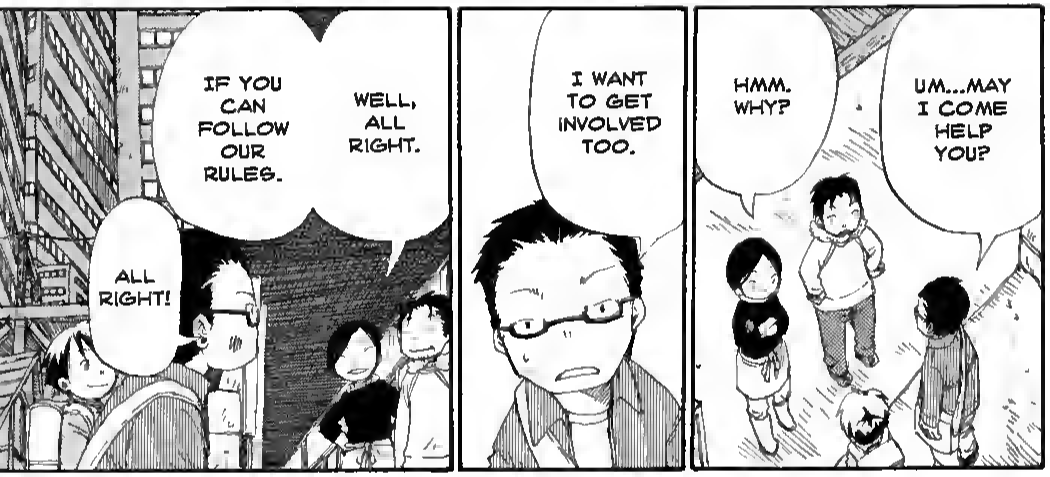

HMM?


YOU PROMISED ME YOU'D TAKE ME TO THE METAL FABRICATION FACTORY 'CAUSE WE BOTH HAVE TODAY OFF.
AH.


MITSU, YOU'VE FOR-GOTTEN.
OH? SOHTA.
HUH?

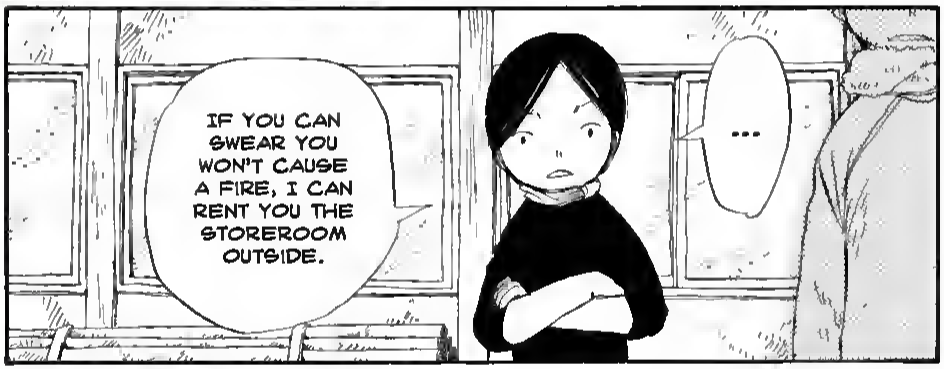

WHOA, YOU'RE PALE.


SO, YOU'RE MAKING A NEW VEHICLE?
I'M MITSU.
OH, THE KID WHO WAS DEAD ON THE STREET.
TH. NKS FOR CALLING. WE'LL MAKE ANYTHING FOR YOU.


IF YOU CAN FOLLOW OUR RULES.
WELL, ALL RIGHT.
ALL RIGHT!
I WANT TO GET INVOLVED TOO.
HMM. WHY?
UM...MAY I COME HELP YOU?


EXCUSE ME, I HAVE ONE MORE FAVOR TO ASK.
NO, AND IT'S NOTHING TO BOAST ABOUT TO MR. TANUKI!
WAH, YOU DON'T NEED TO COME OVER.
...
WAH! MR. KIMOTO?!
MITSU, WOULD YOU CONTACT THIS NUMBER?
GOOD, LET'S GET THE MATERIALS THEN.
I'll borrow your transceiver
HUH, ME?


THERE IS SOMETHING I ABSOLUTELY NEED TO DO.
WOULD YOU PLEASE RENT ME PART OF THE FACTORY, NO QUESTIONS ASKED?
WHAT'RE YOU GONNA DO?
WHAT? WHAT?
I KNOW I'M ASKING FOR A LOT...
...BUT I'D LIKE TO RENT A SPACE TO USE WHEN THE FACTORY ISN'T OPERATING.
WHAT THE HECK? AND YOU'RE NOT TELLING US WHAT YOU'RE GONNA DO THERE?
PLEASE, I CAN ONLY DO IT HERE.
...

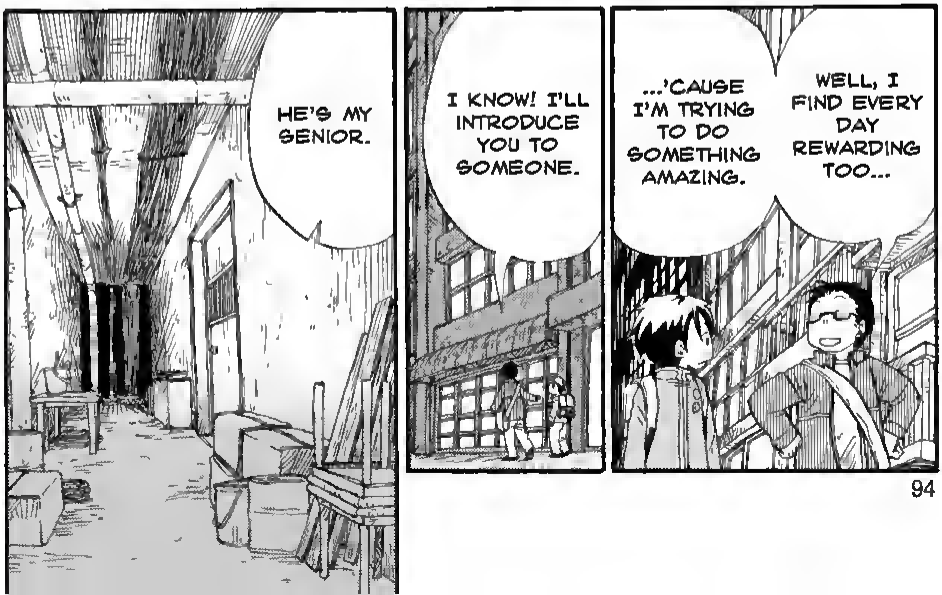

...
IF YOU CAN SWEAR YOU WON'T CAUSE A FIRE, I CAN RENT YOU THE STOREROOM OUTSIDE.


!
COME ON, A GROWN MAN, BEGGING ON HIS KNEES.
SIGH
I TRUST THAT KID, SO I'LL TRUST YOU TOO.
I'm scared.
SOHTA, MR. KIMOTO SAID HE CAN HANDLE ANYTHING.
THANK YOU, MITSU!


MITSU, YOU KNOW A LOT OF PEOPLE.
I DON'T.
HEY, MITSU, YOU THINK ABOUT DESCENDING TO THE SURFACE.
COME ON, YOU'RE JUST DREAMING...
IT'S NOT A DREAM. YOU'RE REALLY GONNA DO IT.
I...
...WANT TO LEAVE PROOF THAT I EXISTED.


...SOME-
THING
THAT BIG
DOESN'T
FEEL
REAL...
TO
ME...
THE FIRST
DESCENT
DEVICE
MADE BY
LOWER-
LEVEL
RESIDENTS!!


...BUT I
FIND EVERY
DAY VERY
REWARDING.
I'M
SPENDING
ALL MY
TIME
DOING
WHAT I
HAVE TO
DO...


HE'S MY
SENIOR.
I KNOW! I'LL
INTRODUCE
YOU TO
SOMEONE.
...'CAUSE
I'M TRYING
TO DO
SOMETHING
AMAZING.
WELL, I
FIND EVERY
DAY
REWARDING
TOO...


KASHAK
MR. NISHI-MARU.
HMM?
I BROUGHT A PILOT CANDIDATE.
HOW...
HOW DO YOU DO.
HELLO.
WELCOME.


MANTA, HE'S SUCH A LITTLE BOY. HIS PARENTS WILL BE WORRIED.
I'M MITSU.
WHAT'S YOUR NAME?
Tch.
WHISPER
WHISPER
DON'T BRING JUST ANYBODY HERE.
HEY, MONTA.
WHA? BUT HE'S A PILOT CANDIDATE.


EXCUSE ME.
IS THAT SO.
AH, MY PARENTS HAVE PASSED AWAY...

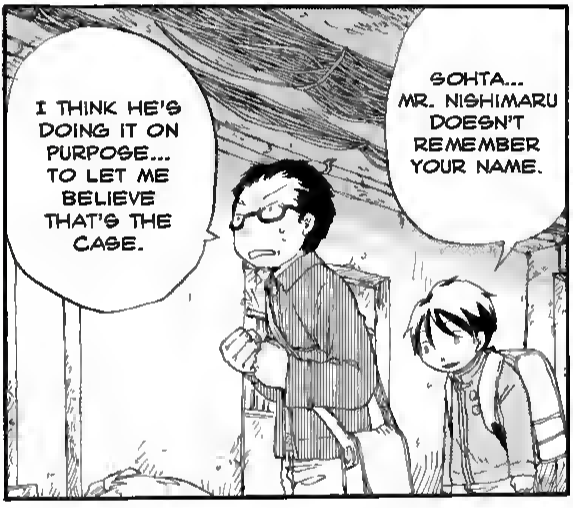

YES, I THINK SO.
CHONTA, WERE YOU ABLE TO FIND A PLACE THAT WILL ASSEMBLE THE DESCENT DEVICE?
YO
HMM.
Y-YES...
MITSU WANTS TO GO TO THE SURFACE.


MITSU.
LET US DO SOMETHING THAT EVEN THE UPPER-LEVEL RESIDENTS CANNOT DO.
LET US PROVE THAT *WE* CAN MAKE A DEVICE THAT CAN DESCEND TO THE SURFACE.

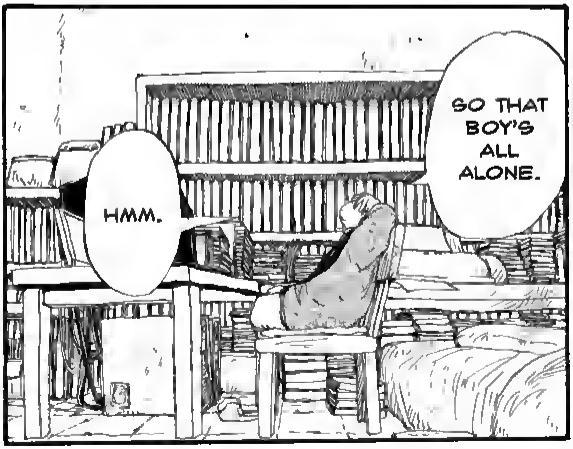

...
SOUNDS GOOD.


I could not say "Yes."


SOHTA, LET'S GO.


SOHTA... MR. NISHIMARU DOESN'T REMEMBER YOUR NAME.
I THINK HE'S DOING IT ON PURPOSE... TO LET ME BELIEVE THAT'S THE CASE.

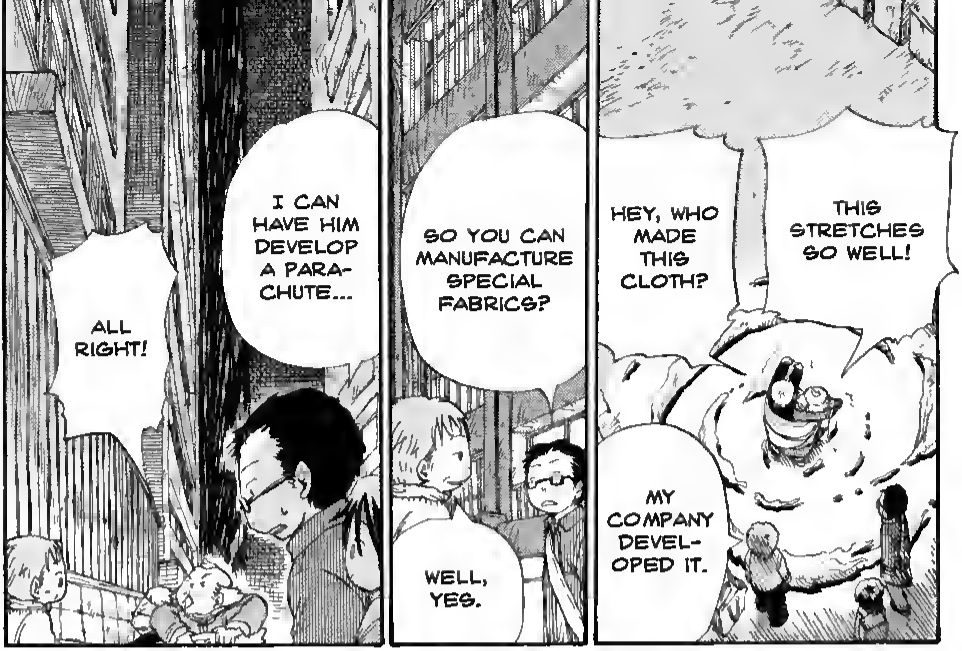

...
I'M GLAD YOU WERE ABLE TO MEET MR. NISHIMARU.

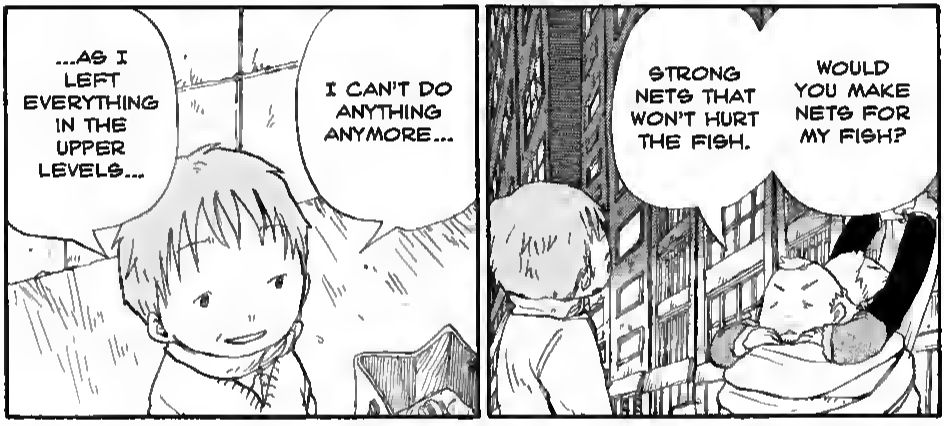

SO THAT BOY'S ALL ALONE.
HMM.

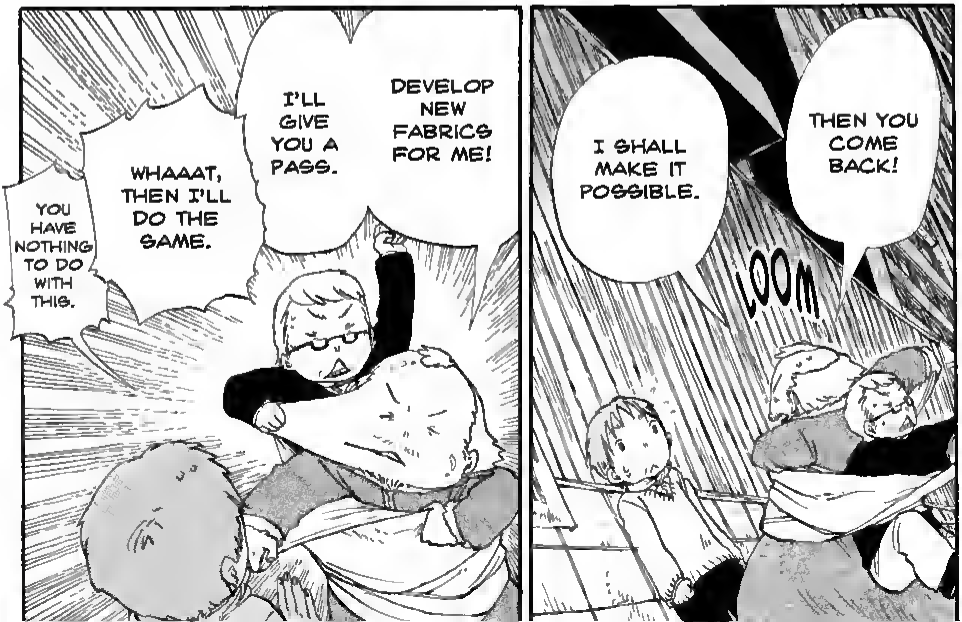

OH, MITSU?
WAH! YOU'RE... FUJIKI.
HELLO. LONG TIME NO SEE.
HOW'RE YOUR T-SHIRTS SELLING?
HMM, WELL.
SO-SO.
YEAH.
AHA HA
THEY'RE NOT SELLING...
FUJIKI, I HOPE A LOT OF THEM SELL SO YOU CAN RETURN TO THE UPPER LEVELS.
HMM? NO, NO.
HMMM
I'M SATISFIED IF PEOPLE...
...ARE HAPPY ABOUT GETTING A GOOD T-SHIRT.


T-SHIRTS FOR SALE
HOW ABOUT ANOTHER ONE?
I'M GLAD.
HEY, DON'T...
MR. KAGEYAMA'S FUYU LOVES IT.
...SOMETIMES.
AH.
WELL, THAT'S GOOD. DO YOU WEAR IT?
AH! I HAVE THIS T-SHIRT.
...
SHUT UP! WHY'RE YOU THE ONLY ONE WHO GOT INVITED?!
...FOLLOW ME HERE!
GRRRAH
GRAH
GRAH
?
WHAT IS THAT T-SHIRT?
HMM? WHO IS THAT MAN?
AH, THIS T-SHIRT IS VERY STURDY.
HELLO...
MITSU, I'D LIKE TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT THE MATERIALS!
OHO! FOUND YOU.


IT STRETCHES AMAZINGLY WELL—
LET'S SEE.
OHO.
HAH.
...
...
SCREE
FETCH
FWAP
!
WHAP
MUCHUCHU
FWAP


ALL RIGHT!
I CAN HAVE HIM DEVELOP A PARA-CHUTE...
SO YOU CAN MANUFACTURE SPECIAL FABRICS?
WELL, YES.
HEY, WHO MADE THIS CLOTH?
THIS STRETCHES SO WELL!
MY COMPANY DEVEL-OPED IT.

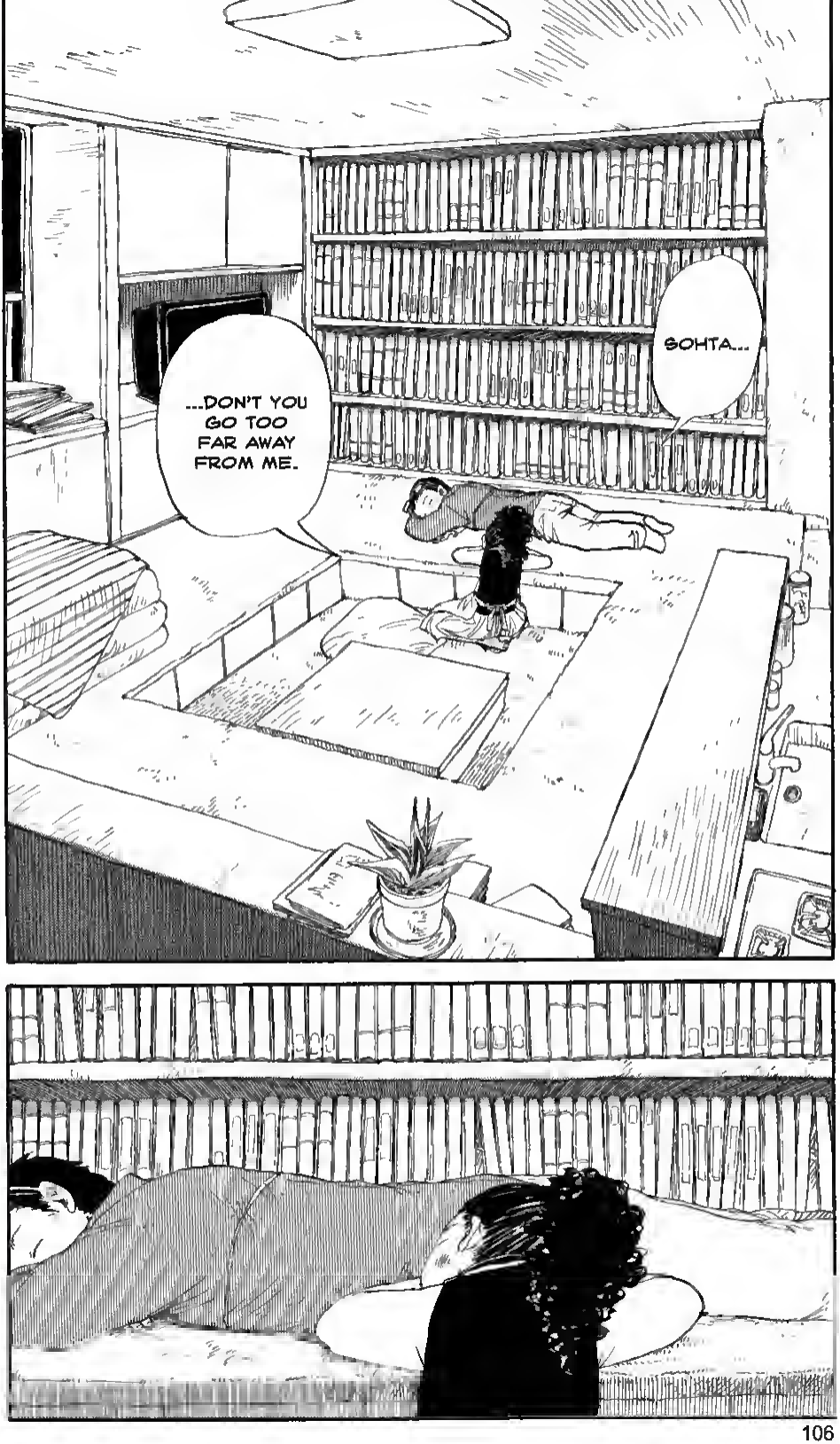

...AS I LEFT EVERYTHING IN THE UPPER LEVELS...
I CAN'T DO ANYTHING ANYMORE...
STRONG NETS THAT WON'T HURT THE FISH.
WOULD YOU MAKE NETS FOR MY FISH?


YOU HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH THIS.
WHAAAT, THEN I'LL DO THE SAME.
I'LL GIVE YOU A PASS.
DEVELOP NEW FABRICS FOR ME!
I SHALL MAKE IT POSSIBLE.
THEN YOU COME BACK!
LOOM

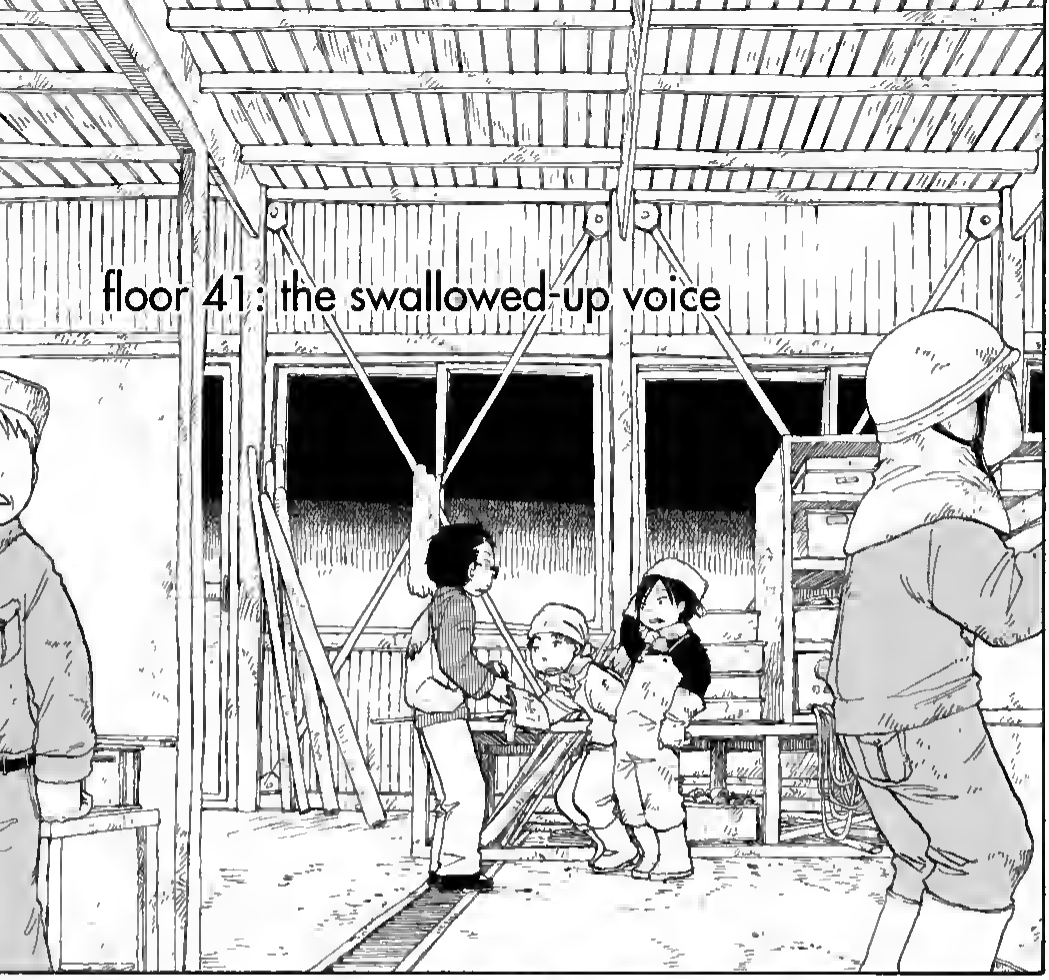

...BUT I GREW UP THERE.
I DON'T WANT TO RETURN TO THE UPPER LEVELS...
WOULD YOU...LIKE TO DO THAT?
FUJIKI.
IF I WERE FREE TO VISIT...
...I WOULD BE SO HAPPY.

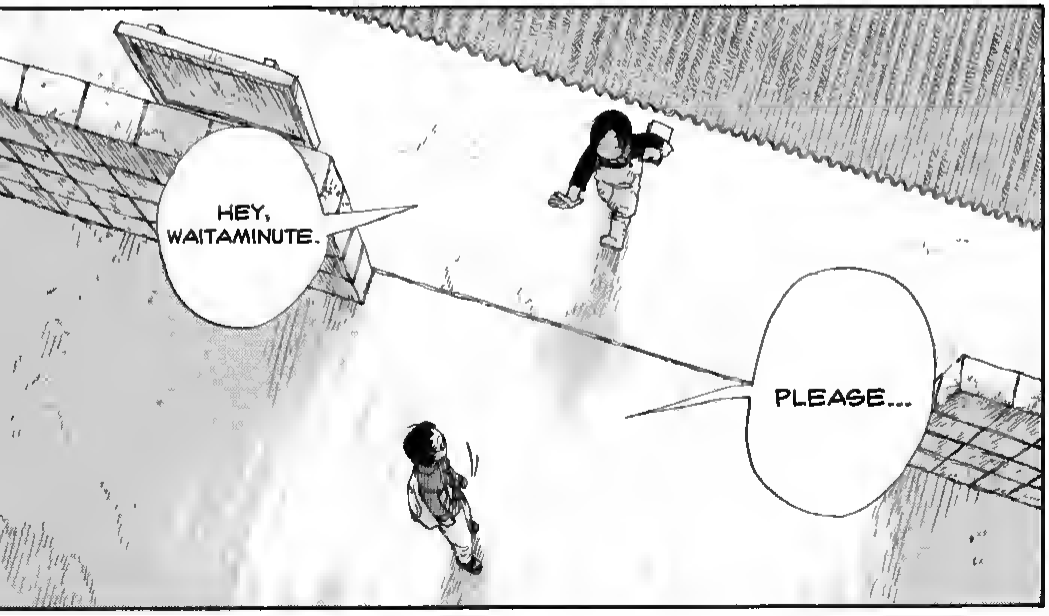

MAY I ASK YOU TO MAKE SOMETHING FOR ME, TOO?
YES, WHEN I'M ABLE TO.
GREAT... I CAN REALLY...
...DO IT...
HAHH HAHH
WHAT'S GOING ON?
WE'RE BEGINNING TO LOOK LIKE THE PATTERN ON THE T-SHIRT!
HOSH
SUMMON
SPIN
SPIN
SPIN

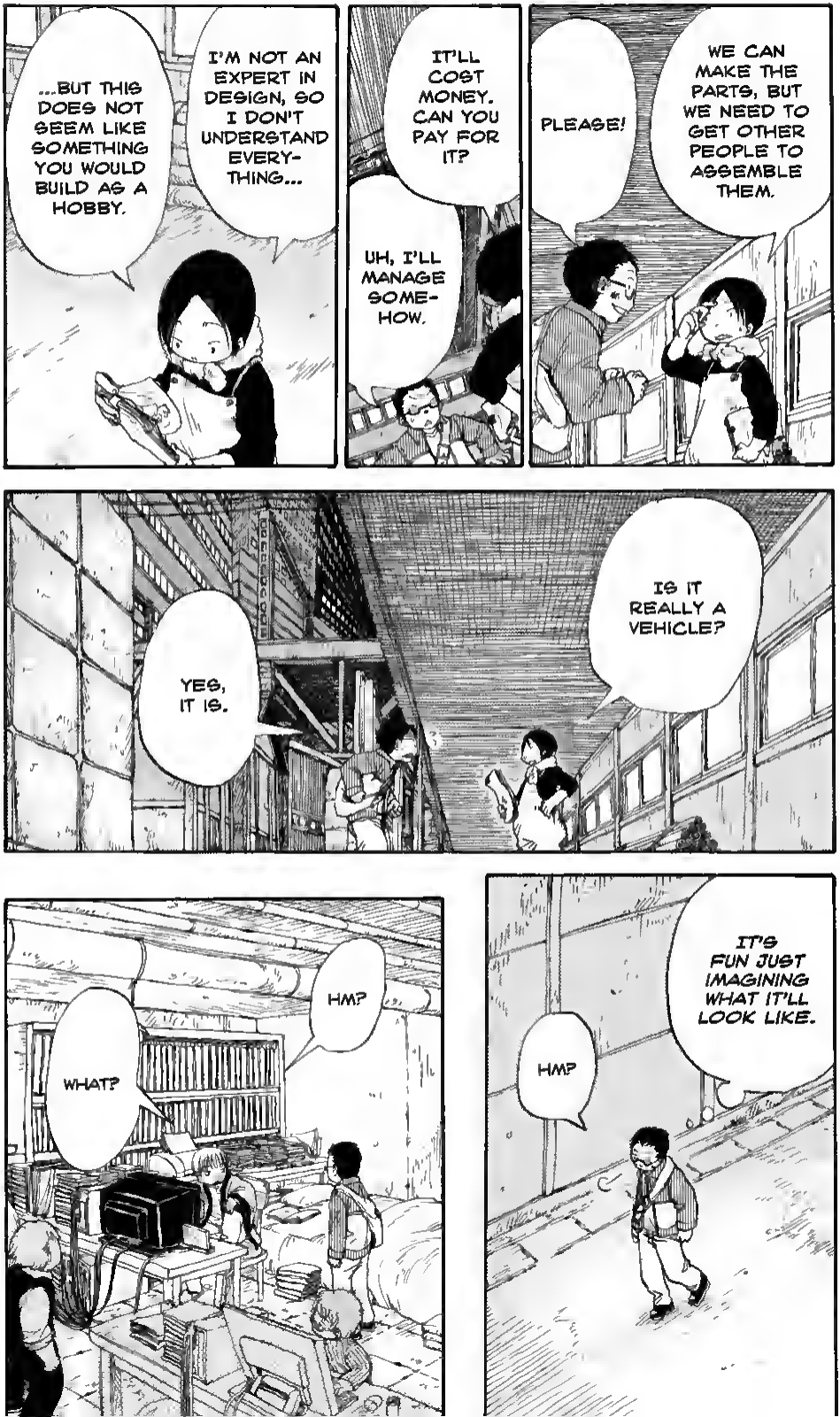

I'M HOME.
KACHAK
WELCOME BACK!
YEAH.
HEY, SOHTA.
HMM? AH, I DON'T NEED TO EAT.
SOHTA, WHAT WERE YOU DOING TODAY?
HMM?
I MET MITSU...
...AND...
...AN...
ZZZ
...


SOHTA...
...DON'T YOU GO TOO FAR AWAY FROM ME.

floor 41: the swallowed-up voice

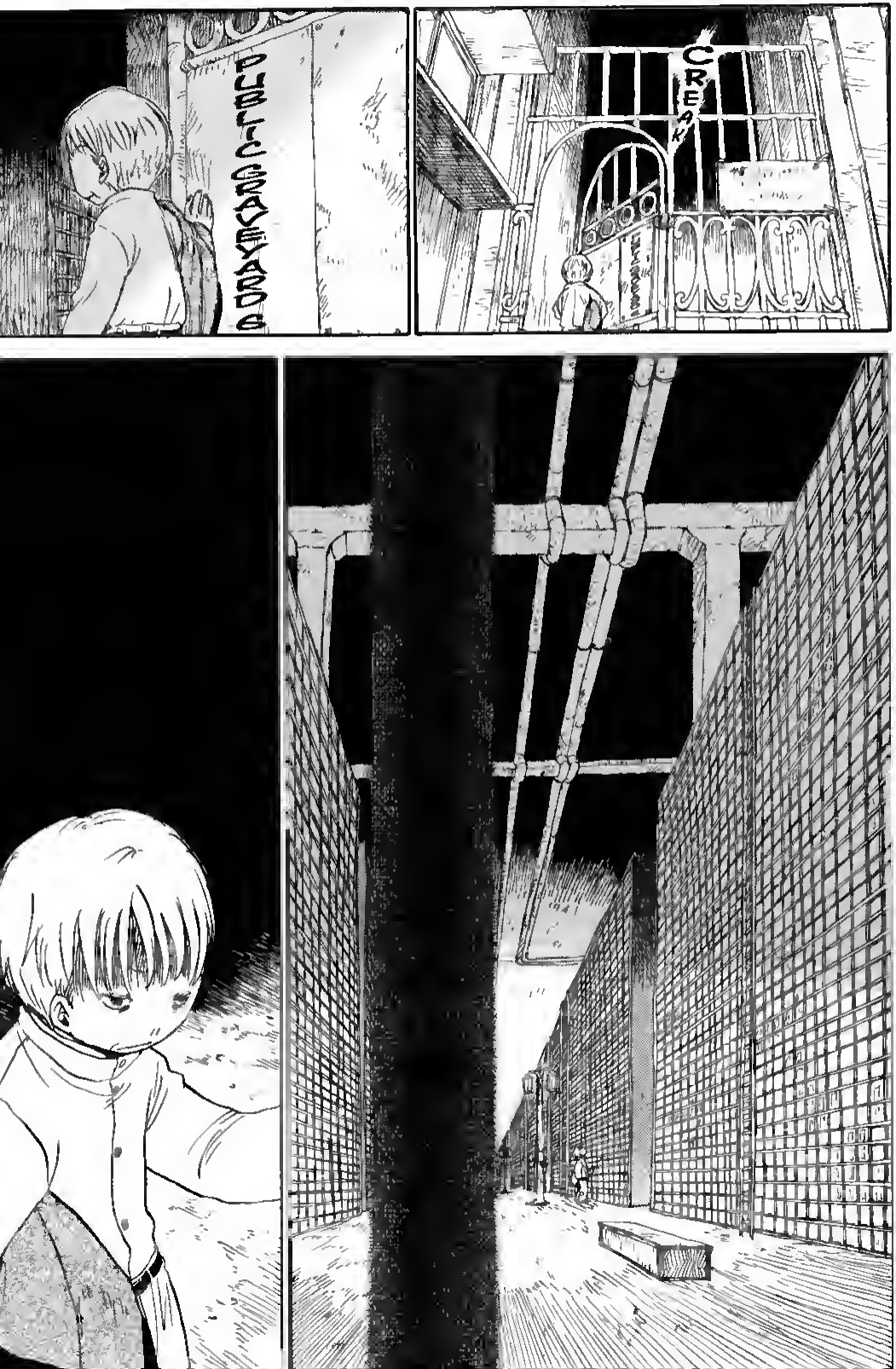





...BUT THIS DOES NOT SEEM LIKE SOMETHING YOU WOULD BUILD AS A HOBBY.
I'M NOT AN EXPERT IN DESIGN, SO I DON'T UNDERSTAND EVERY-THING...
IT'LL COST MONEY. CAN YOU PAY FOR IT?
UH, I'LL MANAGE SOME-HOW.
PLEASE!
WE CAN MAKE THE PARTS, BUT WE NEED TO GET OTHER PEOPLE TO ASSEMBLE THEM.
YES, IT IS.
IS IT REALLY A VEHICLE?
HM?
WHAT?
IT'S FUN JUST IMAGINING WHAT IT'LL LOOK LIKE.
HM?

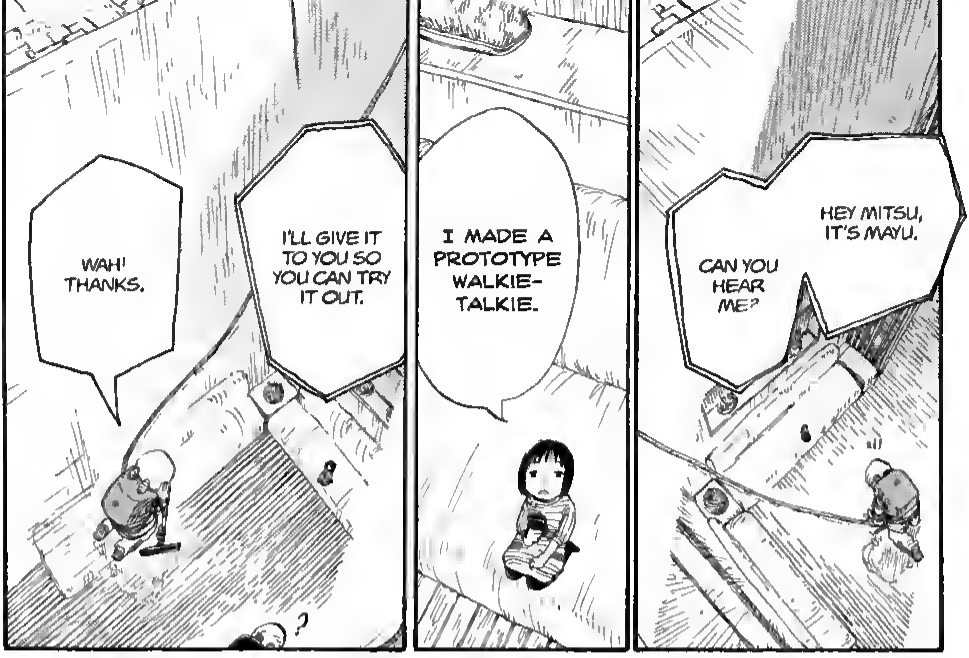

YES.
OH.
UM, WHERE'RE YOU GOING TO LAND THE DESCENT DEVICE?
THE SEA?
YOU WANT TO KILL THE PILOT BY SLAMMING THE DEVICE DOWN ON LAND?
I THINK IT'S BETTER IF WE HAVE IT DESCEND ON LAND.
...SO WE WON'T KNOW HOW MANY DAYS IT MAY DRIFT.
IF IT LANDS ON WATER WE CAN'T PROVIDE ANY DIRECTION FOR IT...
YOU...
...KEEP QUIET.
THE SEA IS BETTER.
NO, THE PILOT WILL DIE.
I DIDN'T MEAN THAT.

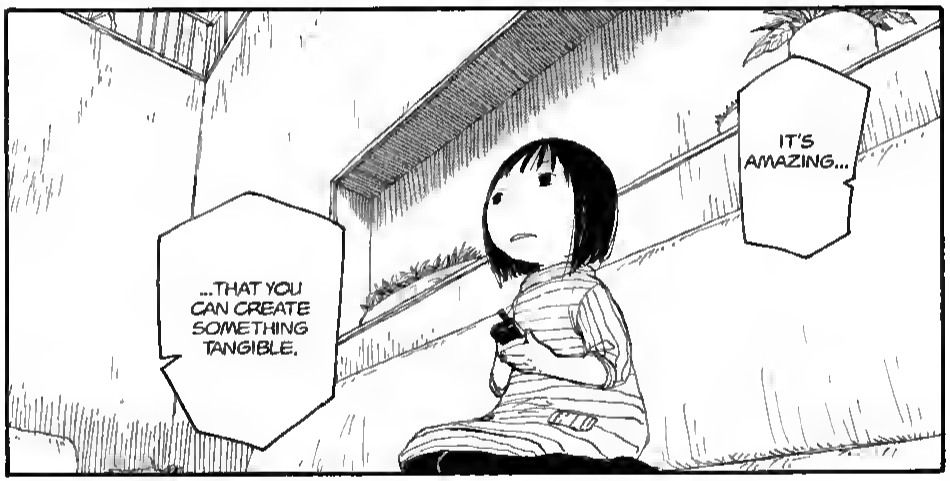

SLAM
I'M GOING OUT FOR A WHILE.
YOU JUST DO WHAT YOU'RE TOLD.
THE PLAN WILL NEVER GO FORWARD OTHERWISE.
I'M SOHTA.
JUST FORGET ABOUT IT, PANDA.
PHEW
SO EVERYONE FEELS THE SAME WAY.
...FEEL THAT WAY SOME-TIMES TOO.
I...
MR. NISHIMARU CAN BE SCARY.
YOU'RE RIGHT.
BUT MR. NISHIMARU HARDLY EVER GOES OUT.

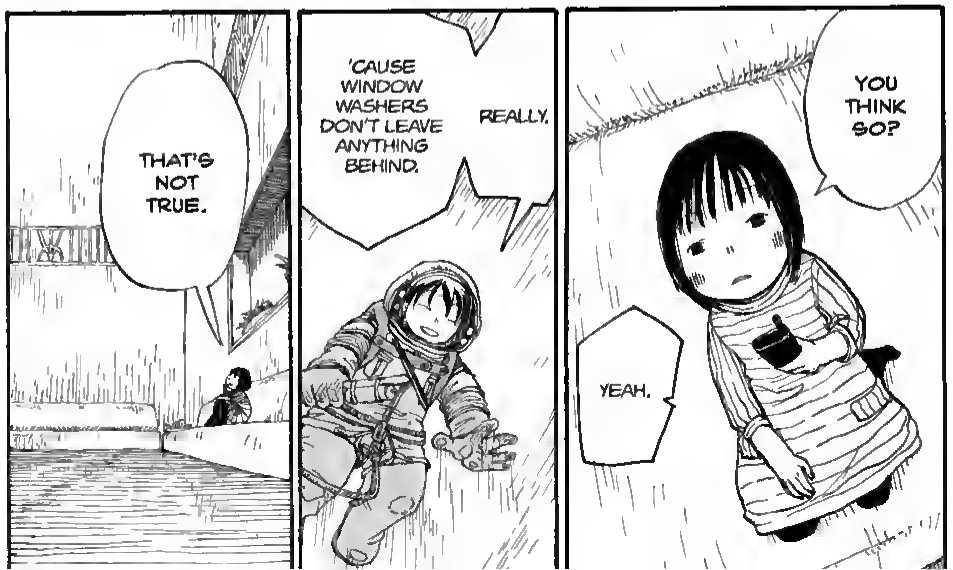

PUBLIC GRAVEYARD
CREAK


I HAVEN'T SEEN MAYU IN A WHILE.
AH.
IT FEELS SO GOOD TO BE OUTSIDE, EH MITSU?
YES, IT DOES.
I'M AFRAID HE'S GONNA FALL ASLEEP...
HMMM HMM HMM.
SQUIK
SQUIK
SIGH
MITSU, WILL YOU TAKE A LOOK?
WHOA, MR. YUKISHIMA, YOU'RE WORKING FAST.


WOW.
LIKE THIS.
SQUIK
SQUIK
SQUIK
JUST A LITTLE BIT MORE...
...
...THAT THE WINDOW'S GOTTEN SHINY.
HM?
YOU CAN TELL...
YEAH?
IT'S SPARKLING.
AMAZING.
PHEW
GOOD.
YEAH, THAT YUKISHIMA.
WHAT'S HE UP TO?
NO, I MEANT BOTH OF THEM.
YES.
ALL RIGHT?
OH? SORRY.
?
SO YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO TELL WHEN IT'S NOT. PLEASE DO A BETTER JOB.

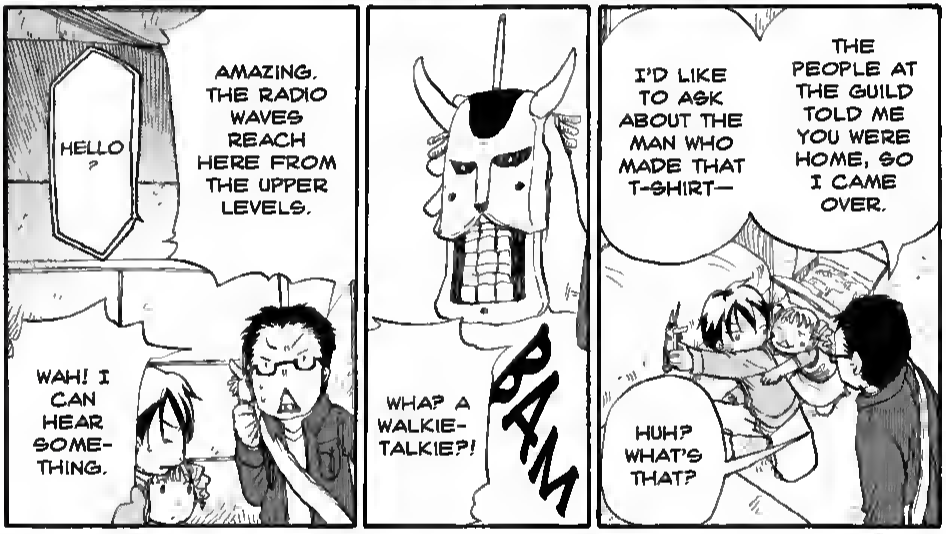

WAH! THANKS.
I'LL GIVE IT TO YOU SO YOU CAN TRY IT OUT.
I MADE A PROTOTYPE WALKIE-TALKIE.
HEY MITSU, IT'S MAYU.
CAN YOU HEAR ME?

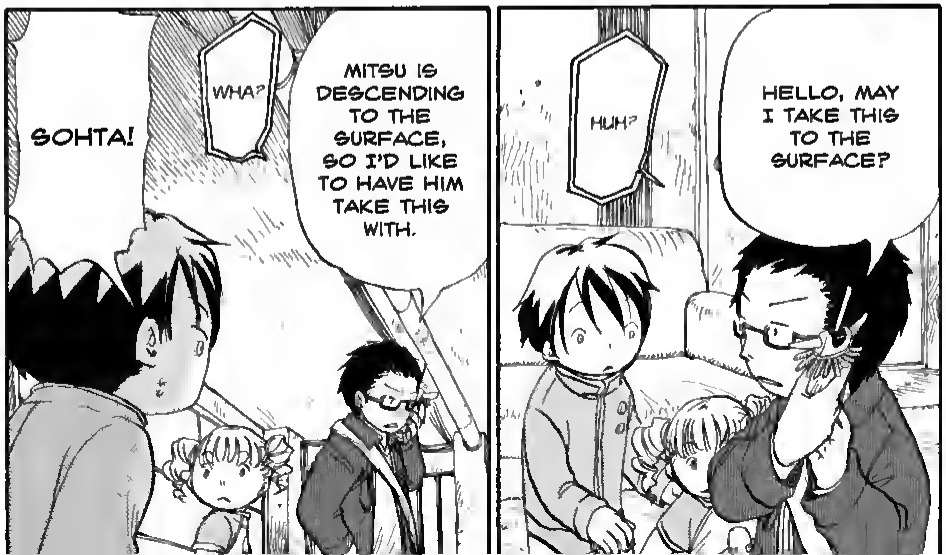

IT'S AMAZING...
...THAT YOU CAN CREATE SOMETHING TANGIBLE.


THAT'S NOT TRUE.
'CAUSE WINDOW WASHERS DON'T LEAVE ANYTHING BEHIND.
REALLY.
YOU THINK SO?
YEAH.

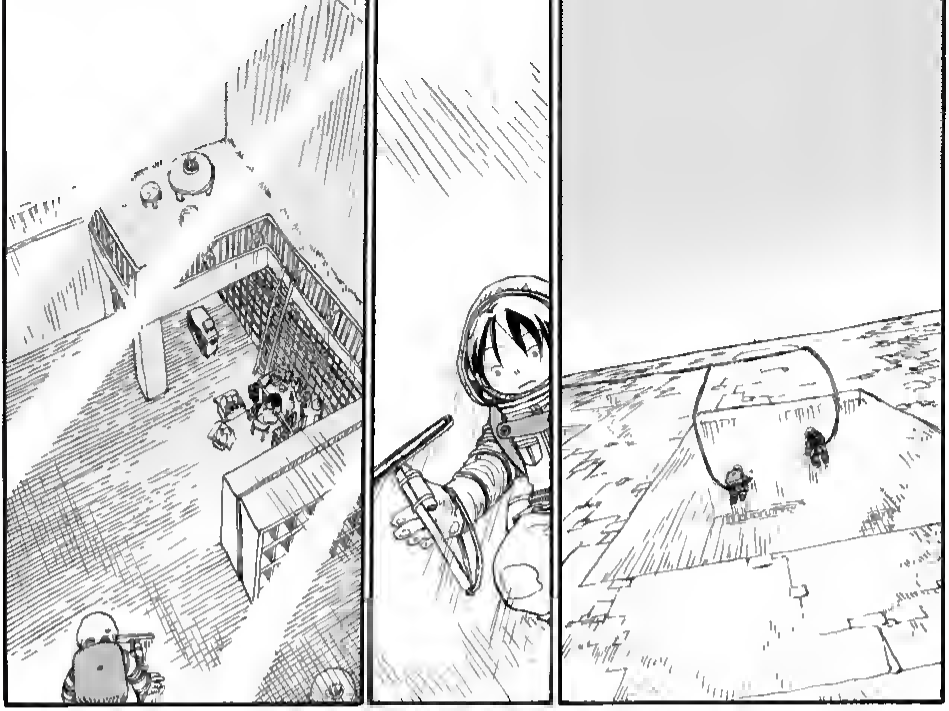

FITS RIGHT IN MY HAND.
WHOA, IT'S GREAT.
I'M GLAD. ...
DID YOU GET IT?
WHO DESIGNED THIS?
I'M NOT AN EXPERT IN DESIGN...
THERE IS A DELAY, BUT I GUESS THE RADIO WAVES TAKE TIME TO GET HERE...
THANK YOU.
WAH, FUYU.
...THAT WE CAN REALLY COMMUNICATE WITH THIS.
I'M JUST AMAZED...
SO YOU MADE THIS... YOU'RE REALLY SOMETHING.
...BUT I THINK IT TURNED OUT PRETTY CUTE.


HUH? OH, SOHTA.
GOOD EVENING, MITSU.


HELLO?
AMAZING. THE RADIO WAVES REACH HERE FROM THE UPPER LEVELS.
WAH! I CAN HEAR SOME-THING.
WHA? A WALKIE-TALKIE?!
BAM
I'D LIKE TO ASK ABOUT THE MAN WHO MADE THAT T-SHIRT—
THE PEOPLE AT THE GUILD TOLD ME YOU WERE HOME, SO I CAME OVER.
HUH? WHAT'S THAT?


SOHTA!
WHA?
MITSU IS DESCENDING TO THE SURFACE, SO I'D LIKE TO HAVE HIM TAKE THIS WITH.
HUH?
HELLO, MAY I TAKE THIS TO THE SURFACE?


I'VE BEEN WANTING TO GO THERE FOR A WHILE.
UH... WELL...
MITSU, YOU'RE GONNA GO TO THE SURFACE?
WE HAVEN'T DECIDED ANYTHING YET...
EVEN THE UPPER AND LOWER LEVELS ARE PRETTY FAR APART.
...IS SO FAR AWAY.
THE SURFACE
BUT I DIDN'T THINK SOHTA WOULD START TELLING OTHER PEOPLE.
SEE? I KNEW IT.
AH, DIDN'T MEAN TO OVERWHELM YOU. JUST FORGET ABOUT IT.
WOULD IT BE POSSIBLE?
Hmm?
PSSSSH
IT WOULD BE INTERESTING IF WE COULD REALLY DO IT.

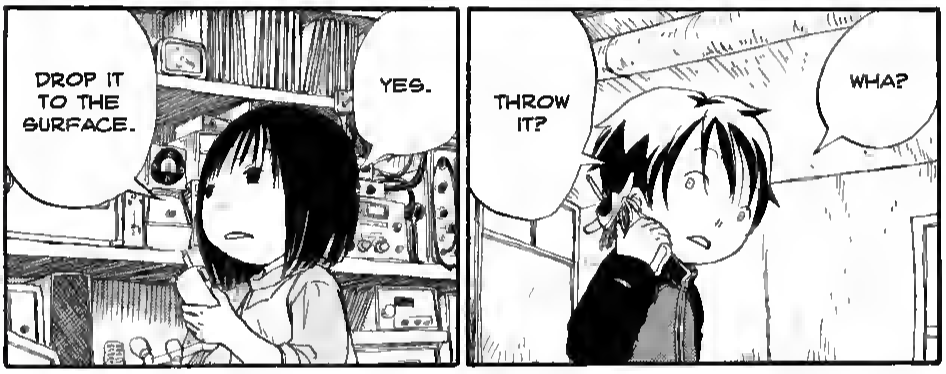





MITSUUU.
I FORGOT TO ASK YOU LAST TIME...
...BUT WOULD YOU GET IN TOUCH WITH THE MAN WHO MADE THOSE T-SHIRTS? HE'S IN THE UPPER LEVELS, RIGHT?
NOT SURE.
OH?


SOHTA, AREN'T YOU ASKING FOR TOO MUCH?
IT SEEMS LIKE YOU'RE INCONVE-NIENCING EVERYBODY.
I PROBABLY JUST NEED TO CALL MR. TANUKI.
THAT WAS QUICK.
I DON'T KNOW.
THEY'VE ACCEPTED BECAUSE THEY WANT TO DEVELOP SOMETHING GOOD AND BE RECOGNIZED FOR IT.
EVERYONE'S ACCEPTED THE CHALLENGE BECAUSE THEY WANT TO TEST THEMSELVES.
WHAT'RE YOU SAYING, MITSU?
EXCUSE ME.
...HOW IT FEELS TO NOT BELONG ANYWHERE, LIKE ME...
THEY KNOW...


ABOUT THAT WALKIE-TALKIE...
MITSU, HELLO.
HELLO.
THAT'S YOUR RING TONE?
WHOA.
HUPP
MON MO- MO- MO- MOON


DROP IT TO THE SURFACE.
YES.
THROW IT?
WHA?

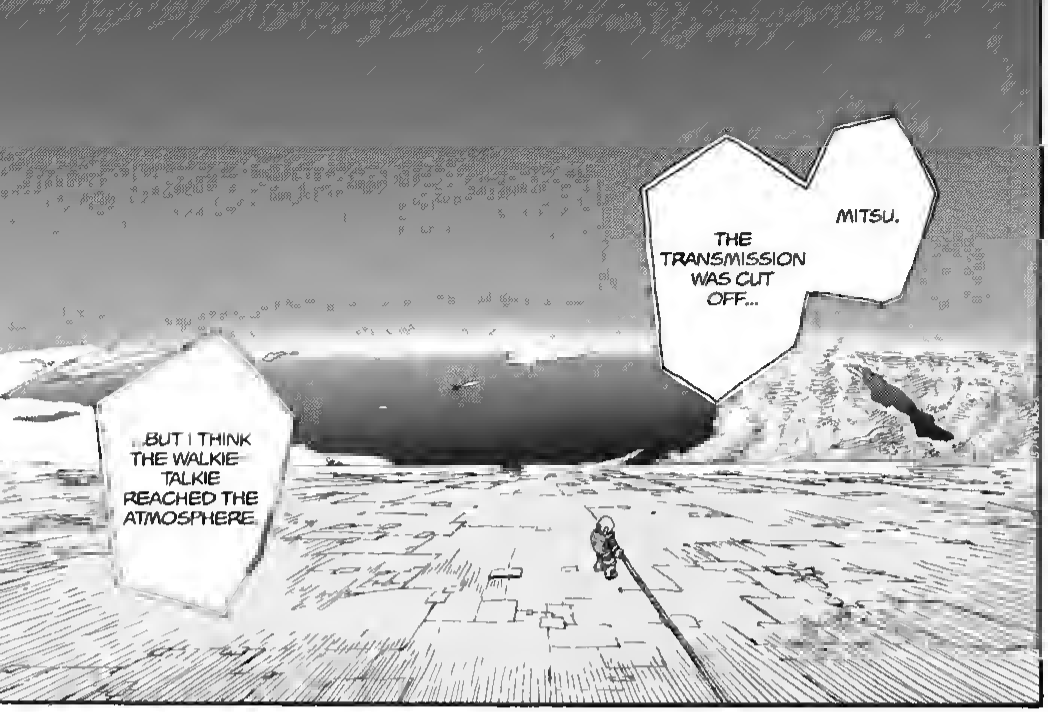

OKAAAY.
MR. YUKISHIMA, WAIT FOR JUST A MOMENT.


MAYU, CAN YOU HEAR ME?
YAH.
I feel a little sad watching it drop...
WHOP
TOSS IT AS FAR AS YOU CAN, 'CAUSE I WANT TO CHECK THE STRENGTH AND CAPACITY OF THE WALKIE-TALKIE.
YEAH.
YOU REALLY SURE?
KLINK
KLANK
KLINK


KLINK
KLINK
KLANK
KLANK
KLANK
!!!


SHIVER
KRRR
OH?
IS THIS THE SAME SOUND IT'LL MAKE WHEN MITSU IS DESCENDING?
OH?
I'm scared...
PLEASE STOP.
Stop...
But...
I'LL GO GET THAT WALKIE-TALKIE TOO...
BZZT
BZZ
BZZ


SSSS
SSSS
SSSS
SSSS
THE TRANSMISSION WAS CUT OFF ON THE WAY DOWN.
YEAH?
WAS THE TEST...
...USEFUL?
YEAH, THANKS.
I'LL MAKE A NEW ONE FOR YOU.

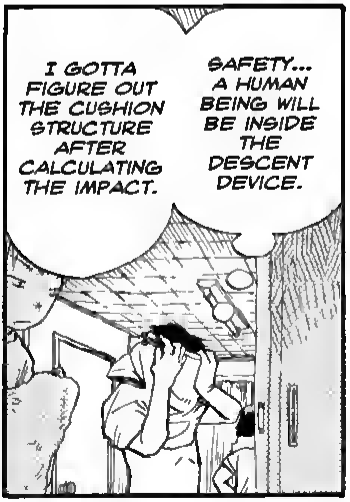

MITSU.
THE TRANSMISSION WAS CUT OFF...
...BUT I THINK THE WALKIE TALKIE REACHED THE ATMOSPHERE.


UH, YEAH.
ALL RIGHT, THEN I'LL GO CHECK THE PIPES.


SOHTA, GOOD JOB.
YOU'RE GONNA DO YOUR RESEARCH TODAY TOO.


...


...
WHAT ELSE COULD ENDANGER THE PILOT'S LIFE? CAN I HANDLE IT?


I GOTTA FIGURE OUT THE CUSHION STRUCTURE AFTER CALCULATING THE IMPACT.
SAFETY... A HUMAN BEING WILL BE INSIDE THE DESCENT DEVICE.


SOHTA, WHY'RE YOU SMILING?


HUH?
WAS I?
'Cause...

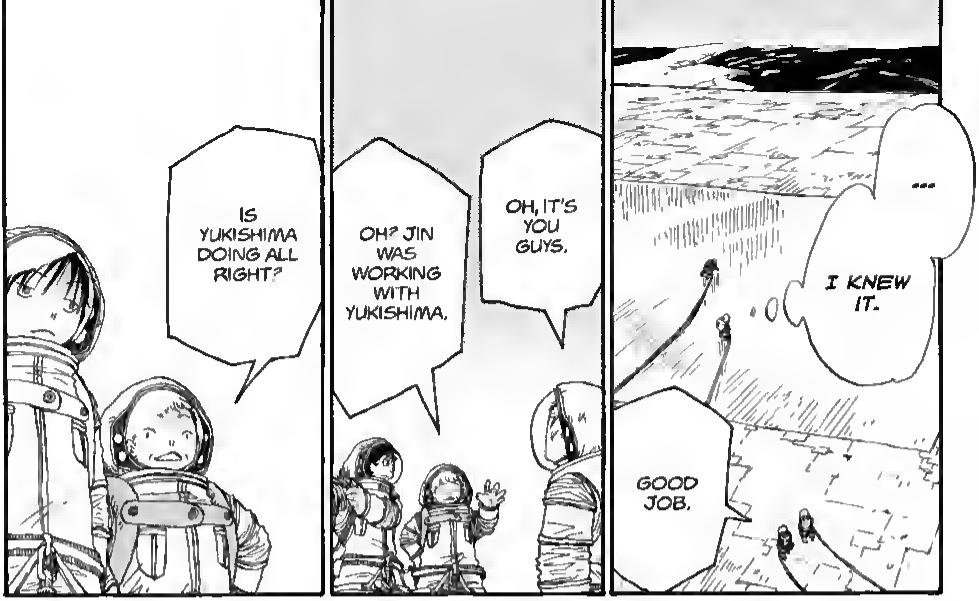

Isn't that amazing?
...we're gonna have Mitsu descend to the surface.

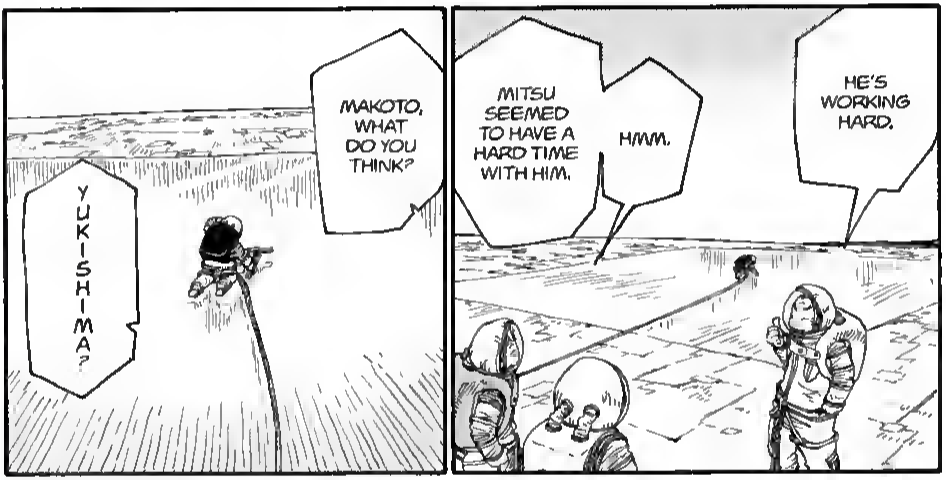


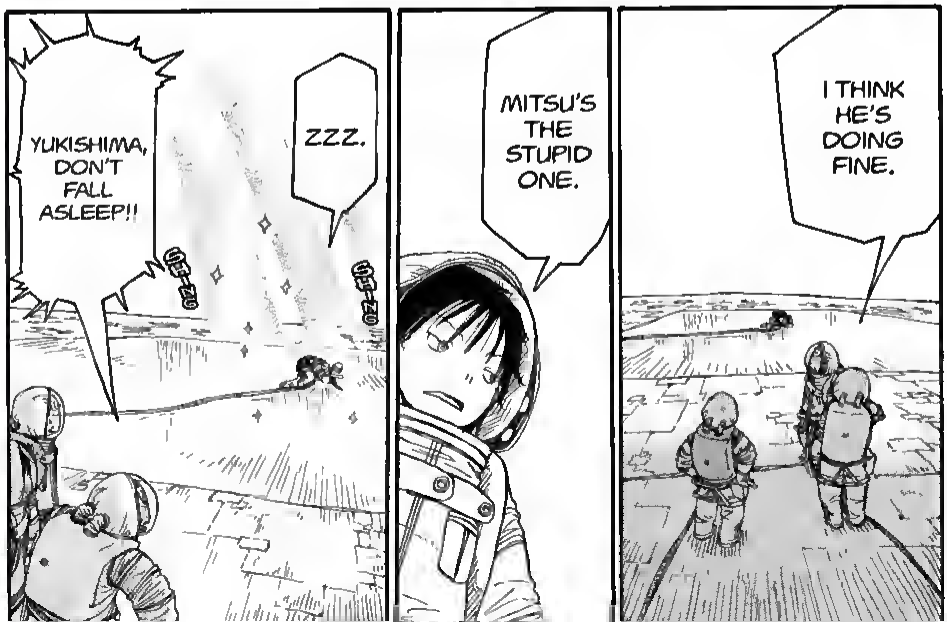
floor 42: Yukishima and fried chicken


...IT'S FRIED CHICKEN!
SHP
I SMELL SOMETHING GOOD.
SNIFF
THAT SMELL...
SZ-ELL
YOU, JIN! MITSU'S MASTER! WHAT'RE YOU CARRYING?!
TROMP
TROMP
MY LUNCH.
I'M WORKING THE LATE SHIFT, SO I'M HAVING LUNCH WITH TAMACHI.
AH, YUKISHIMA. YOU WORK WITH ME NEXT TIME.
WHA?
AND YOU'LL TREAT ME TO LUNCH IF I WORK WITH YOU...
NO LUNCH FOR YOU.
THEN...
I HUMBLY REFUSE.
BOW
ENOUGH, YOU'RE GONNA WORK WITH ME!
Whal


SHUT UP!
OH.
NA NA.
NA NAAA.
NA, NAA NAA.
HMM HMM HMMM.
HMM HMMMM.
NA ♪
JIN, HOW'S THIS WAXING?
MITSU, DOESN'T THIS BOTHER YOU?
JUST A LITTLE BIT MORE. THE WAX SHOULD BE A LITTLE LIGHTER AND THINNER, OTHERWISE IT'LL LOOK WAVY.
YES.
OOH.
OHO, PRETTY GOOD.
...
HMM? LET ME SEE.

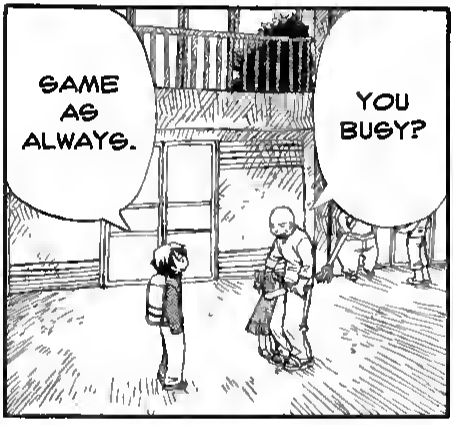

IS YUKISHIMA DOING ALL RIGHT?
OH? JIN WAS WORKING WITH YUKISHIMA.
OH, IT'S YOU GUYS.
...
I KNEW IT.
GOOD JOB.


MAKOTO, WHAT DO YOU THINK?
YUKISHIMA?
MITSU SEEMED TO HAVE A HARD TIME WITH HIM.
HMM.
HE'S WORKING HARD.

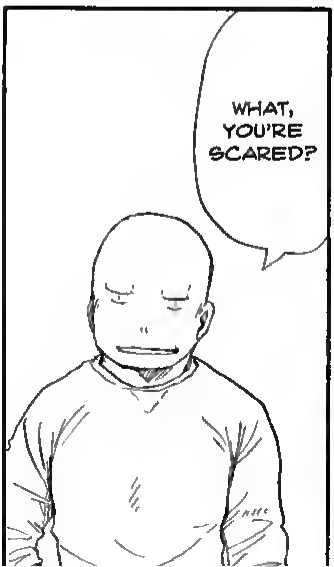

YUKISHIMA, DON'T FALL ASLEEP!!
ZZZ.
MITSU'S THE STUPID ONE.
I THINK HE'S DOING FINE.


YUKISHIMA, HOW WAS WORK TODAY?
WHA? HOW WAS WORK?
SEE YOU THEN.
YO.
I THOUGHT MASTER DID A GREAT JOB.
AHA.
I'VE GOT A LOT TO LEARN.

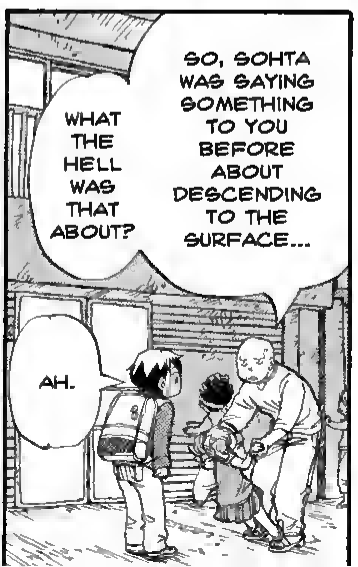

AH!


YOU BUSY?
SAME AS ALWAYS.

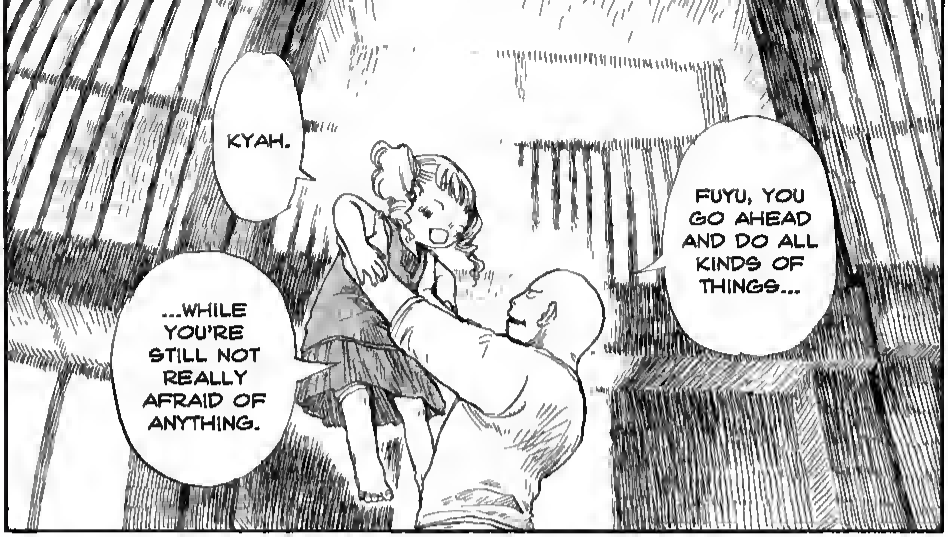

MR. KAGEYAMA, LONG TIME NO SEE!
YO.


WHAT, YOU'RE SCARED?

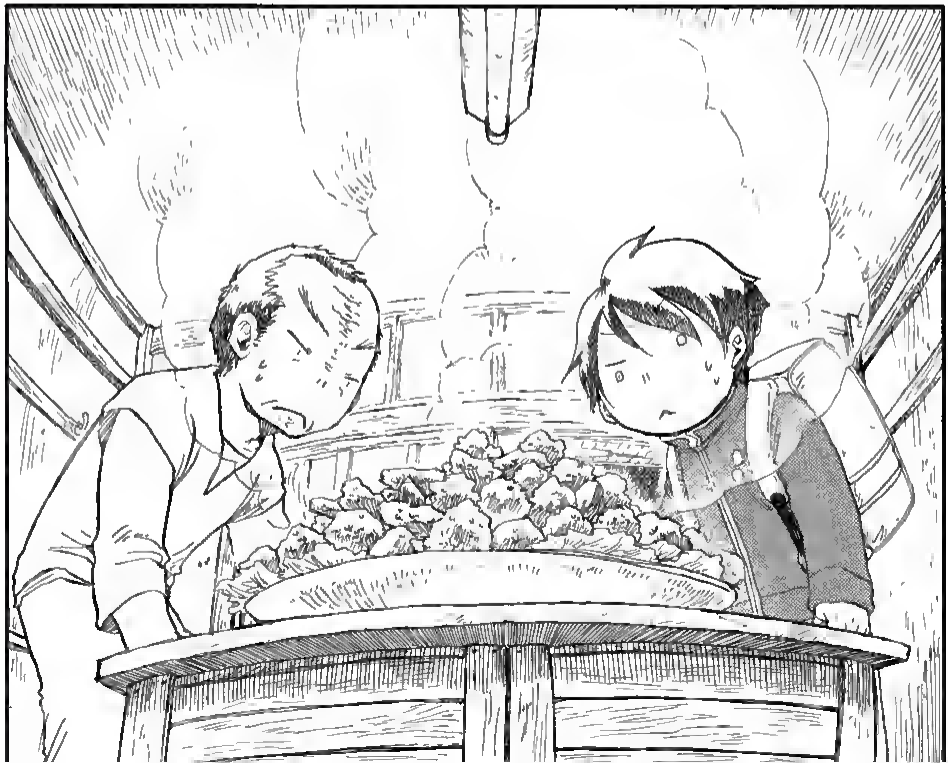

IF YOU'RE REALLY GOING, GET ME A SOUVENIR.
IT MUST BE A JOKE.
I don't wanna hear it!


SO, SOHTA WAS SAYING SOMETHING TO YOU BEFORE ABOUT DESCENDING TO THE SURFACE...
WHAT THE HELL WAS THAT ABOUT?
AH.

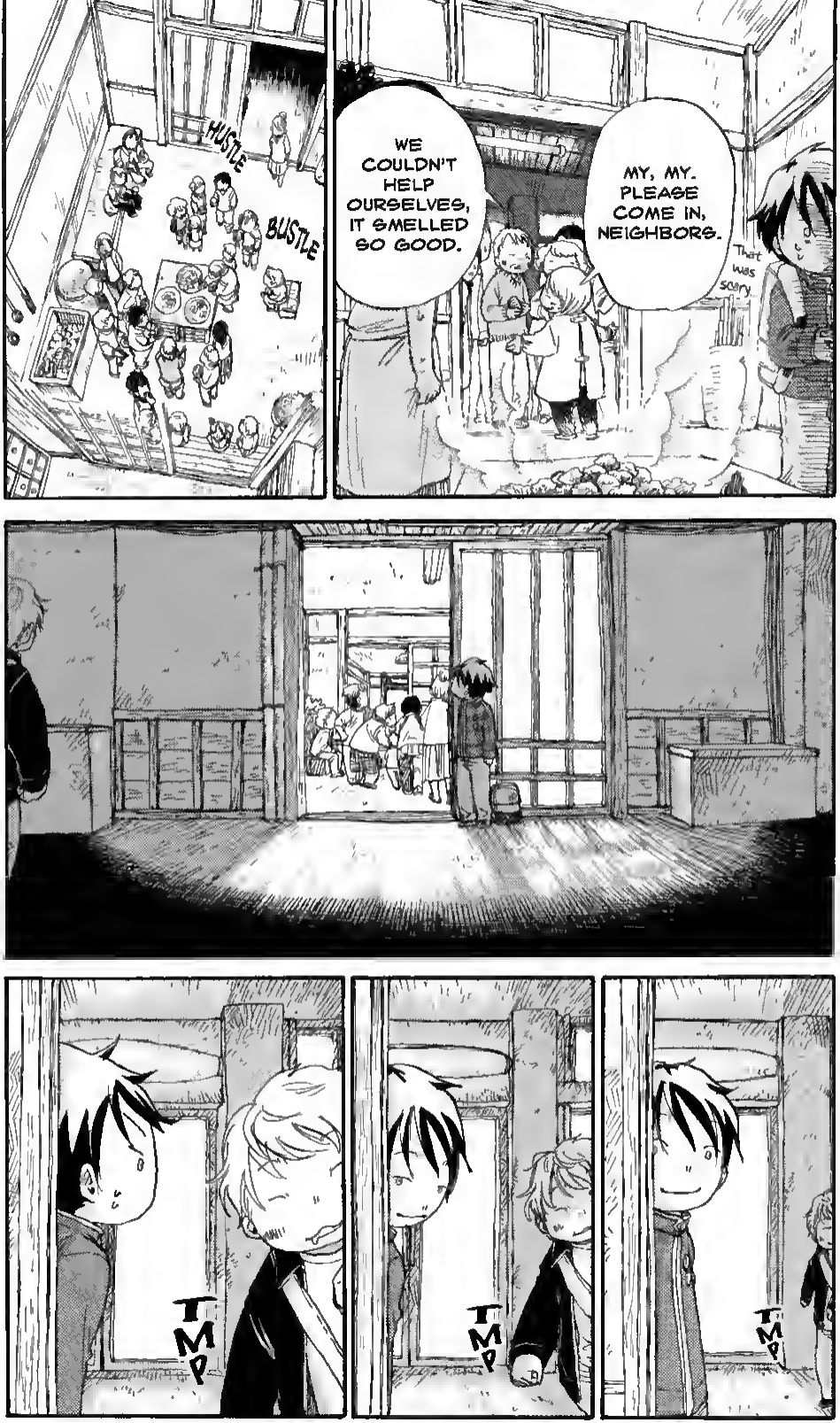

BEING OUTSIDE THE WINDOW AND BEING ON THE SURFACE SHOULDN'T BE THAT DIFFERENT.
NO... I'M STILL SCARED.
HELLO.
UH... YOU'RE RIGHT.
IF YOU THINK HE'S JOKING, GO ALONG WITH IT.
HEEY, MITSU.
NO.
THE SURFACE MIGHT BE PARADISE.
NO, MY WIFE IS COMING HOME LATE, SO I'LL STAY IN.
YO, HOW ABOUT YOU TOO, KAGE-YAMA?
OH, JIN.
WHY DON'T YOU COME EAT WITH US?


KYAH.
FUYU, YOU GO AHEAD AND DO ALL KINDS OF THINGS...
...WHILE YOU'RE STILL NOT REALLY AFRAID OF ANYTHING.

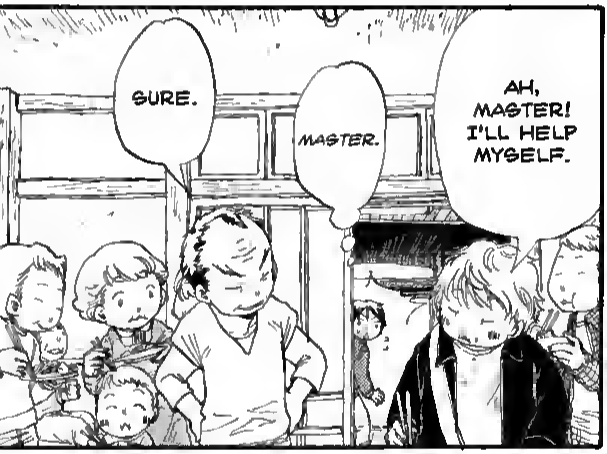

ALL RIGHT.
I'LL GET BACK TO WORK.
...I'LL NEED TO THINK ABOUT YOU MARRYING A WINDOW WASHER.
AH! BUT...




WE'VE GOT LOTS.
MOMP
MOMP
Haruko, watch out
JIN, WHAT IS THIS?
FRIED CHICKEN.
It's artificial meat, but it's good
HE SEEMS BUSY.
WHERE'S SOHTA?
OH? KAYO, SURPRISED TO SEE YOU HERE.
HARUKO DROPPED BY THE STALL...
...SO WE BROUGHT THE LEFT-OVERS.
...
CROWD
MRMR
HE'S GONE ON HIS DAYS OFF TOO.
TODAY HE WALKED OUT THE DOOR MUMBLING SOMETHING ABOUT THE OUTSIDE.
OH.


HUSTLE
BUSTLE
WE COULDN'T HELP OURSELVES, IT SMELLED SO GOOD.
MY, MY. PLEASE COME IN, NEIGHBORS.
That was scary
TMP
TMP
TMP

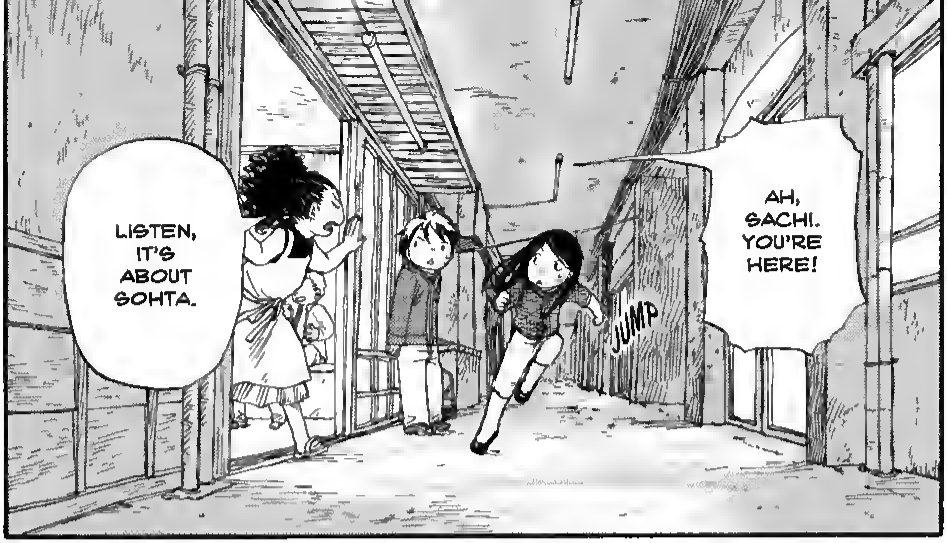

YUKISHIMA ?!
YES.
I WAS INVITED TOO...

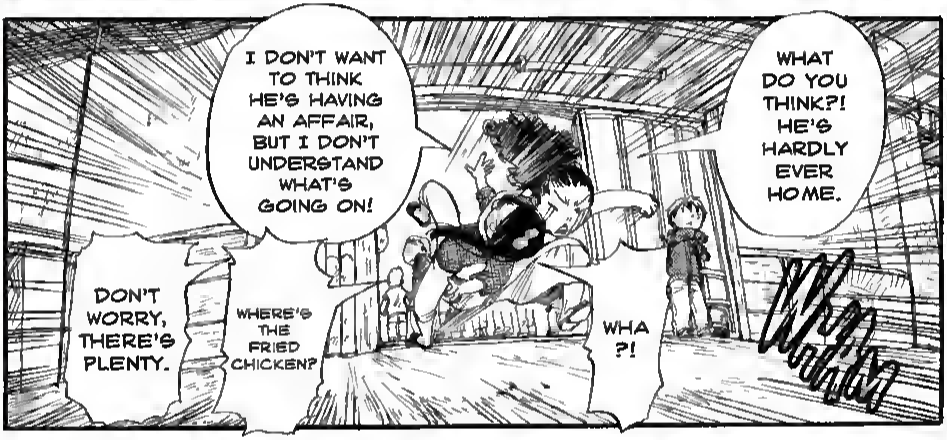

AH, MASTER! I'LL HELP MYSELF.
MASTER.
SURE.

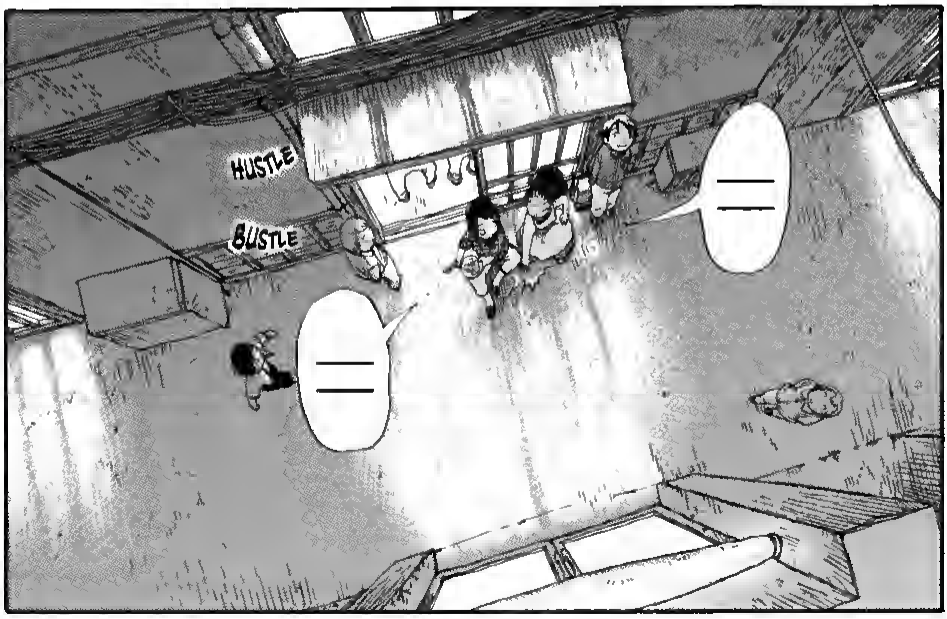

IT WAS REALLY GOOD.
Huh?
ZOOM
YESS.

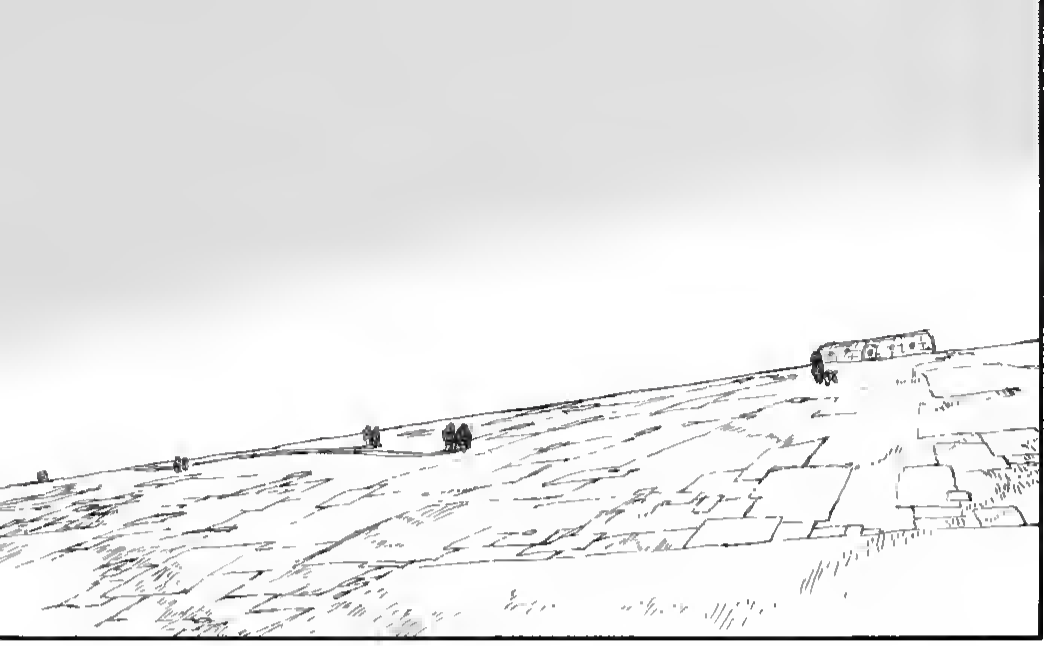

HUSTLE
TWITCH
TMP
BUSTLE

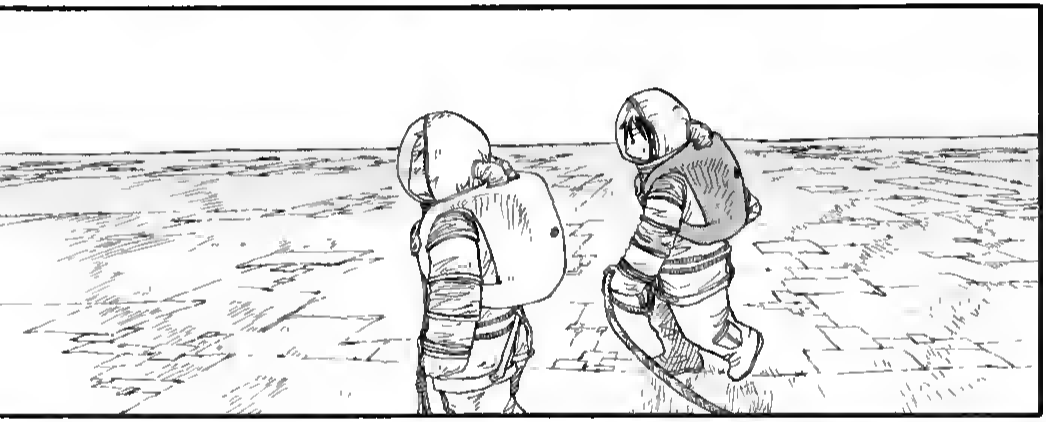

OF COURSE. JIN WORKS SO MUCH HARDER THAN I DO.
ALL RIGHT.
I'LL TRY HARDER...


LISTEN, IT'S ABOUT SOHTA.
AH, SACHI. YOU'RE HERE!
JUMP

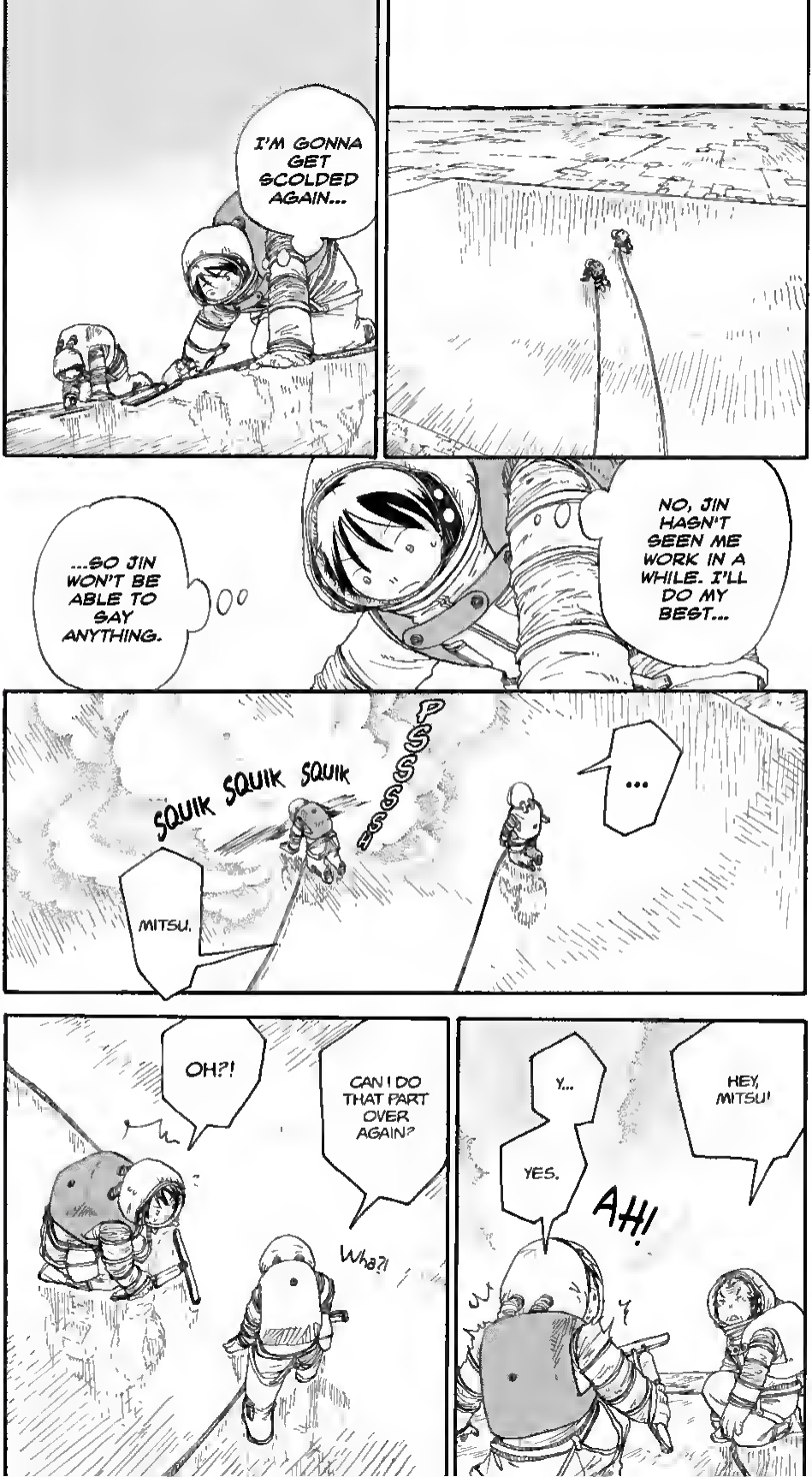

I DON'T WANT TO THINK HE'S HAVING AN AFFAIR, BUT I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT'S GOING ON!
WHAT DO YOU THINK?! HE'S HARDLY EVER HOME.
DON'T WORRY, THERE'S PLENTY.
WHERE'S THE FRIED CHICKEN?
WHA ?!

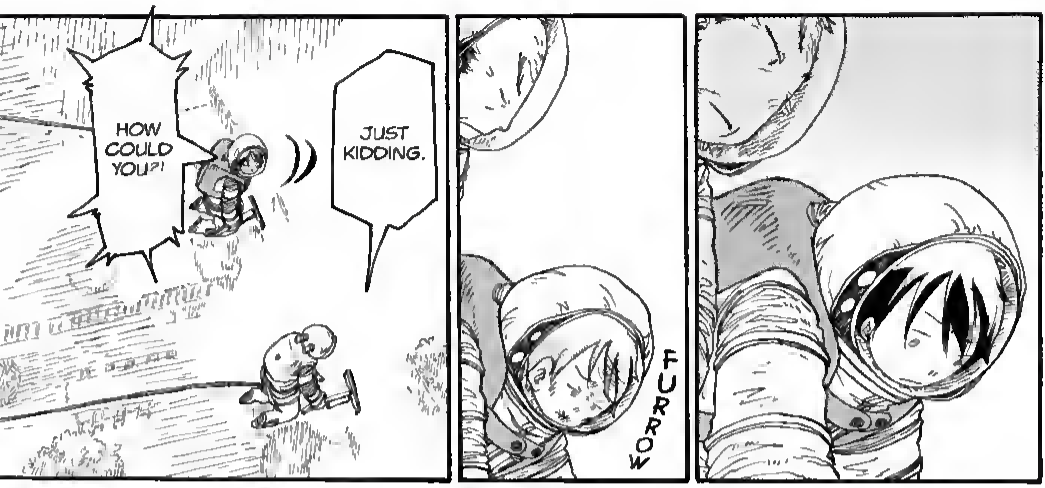

HUSTLE
BUSTLE

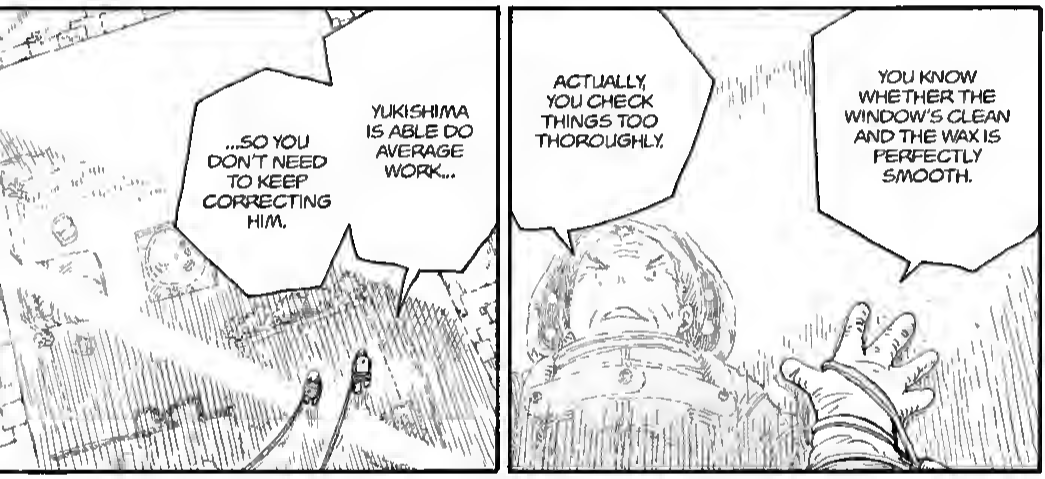


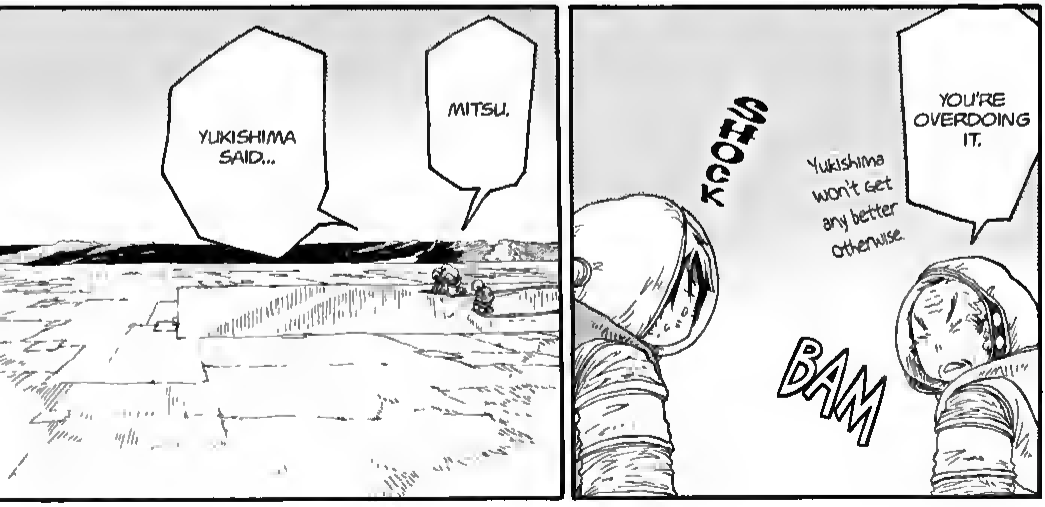



WHA? BUT MITSU'S WORKING PRETTY HARD.
MAYBE JIN'S GONNA TEACH HIM.
I DUNNO.
HASN'T IT BEEN A WHILE SINCE JIN AND MITSU LAST WORKED TOGETHER?
AH, MAKOTO.
OH?

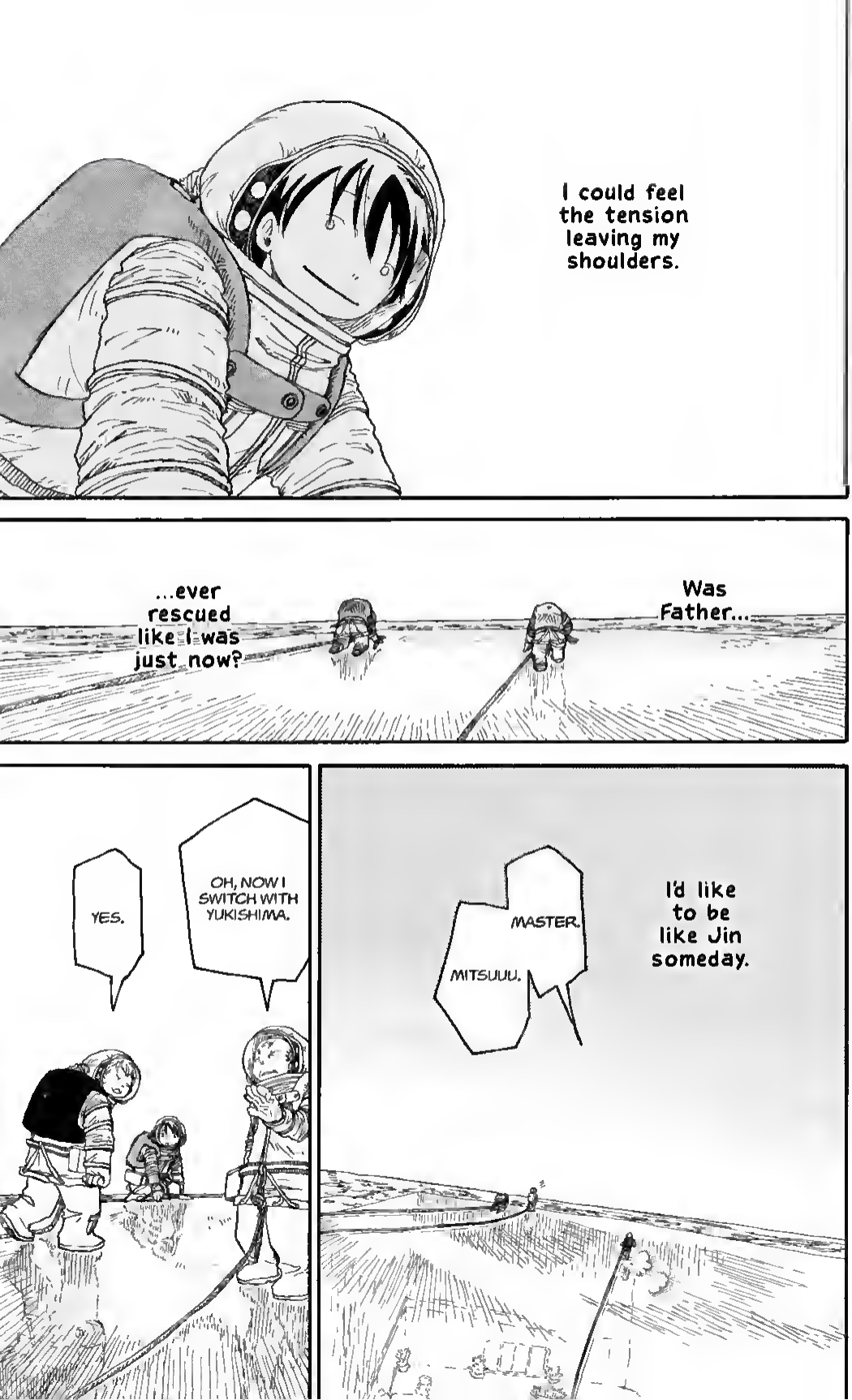

I'M GONNA GET SCOLDED AGAIN...
NO, JIN HASN'T SEEN ME WORK IN A WHILE. I'LL DO MY BEST...
...SO JIN WON'T BE ABLE TO SAY ANYTHING.
SQUIK SQUIK SQUIK
PSSSSSE
...
MITSU.
OH?!
CAN I DO THAT PART OVER AGAIN?
Wha?!
Y...
YES.
AH!
HEY, MITSU!

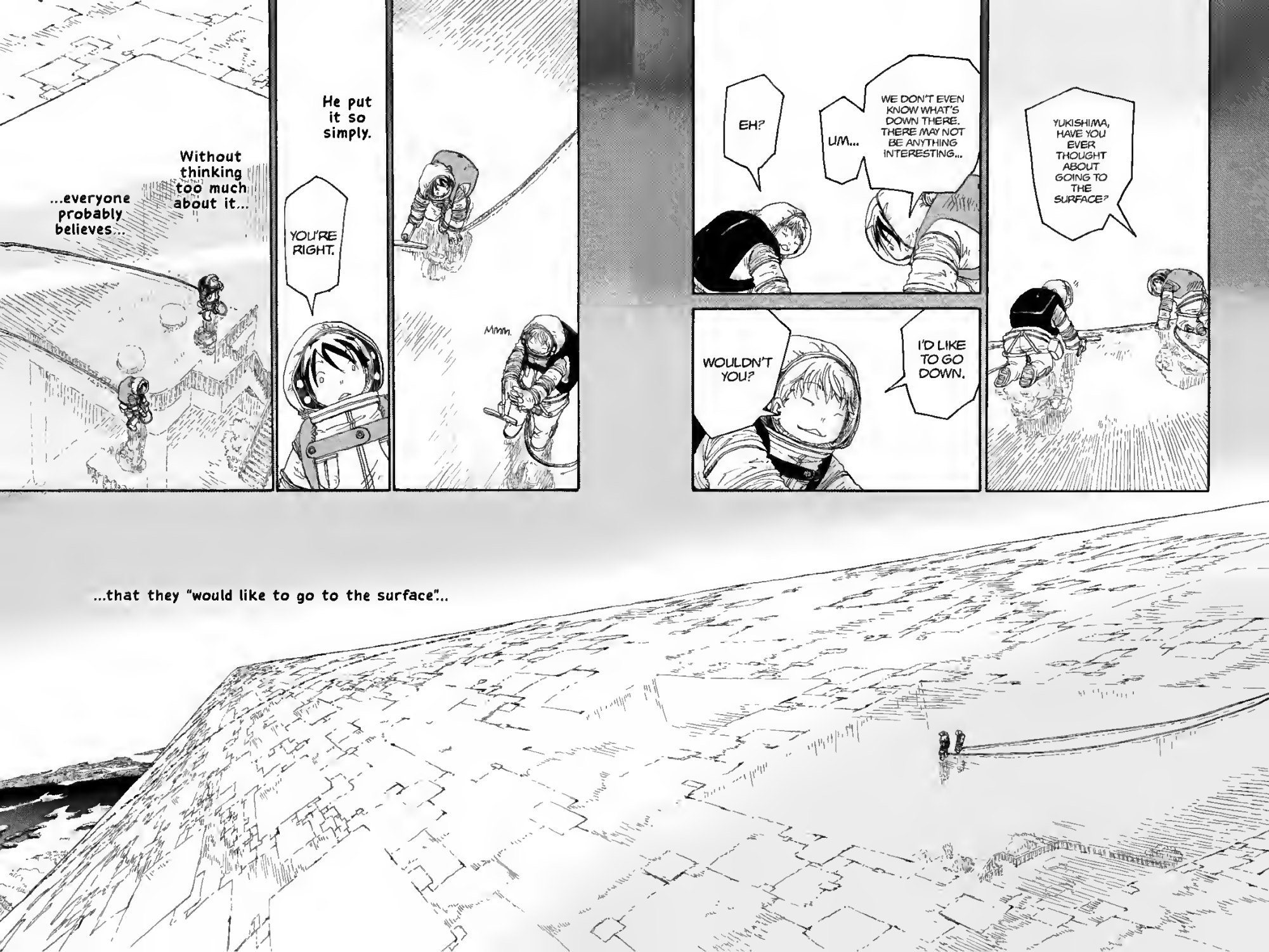

HOW COULD YOU?!
JUST KIDDING.
FURROW


...SO YOU DON'T NEED TO KEEP CORRECTING HIM.
YUKISHIMA IS ABLE DO AVERAGE WORK...
ACTUALLY, YOU CHECK THINGS TOO THOROUGHLY.
YOU KNOW WHETHER THE WINDOW'S CLEAN AND THE WAX IS PERFECTLY SMOOTH.

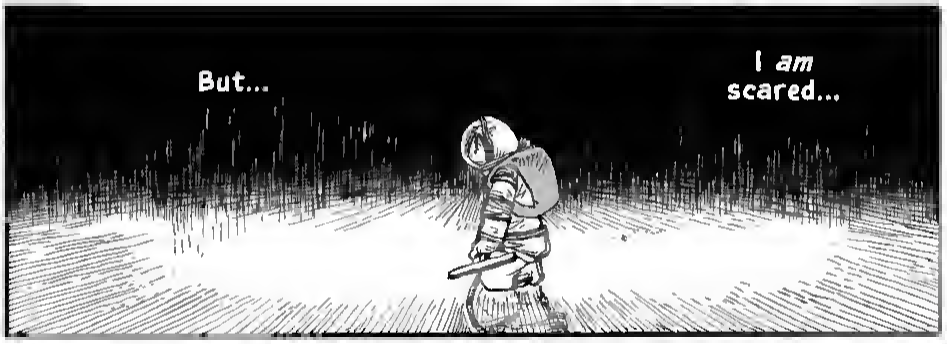

YUKISHIMA SAID...
MITSU.
SHOCK
Yukishima won't get any better otherwise.
YOU'RE OVERDOING IT.
BAM

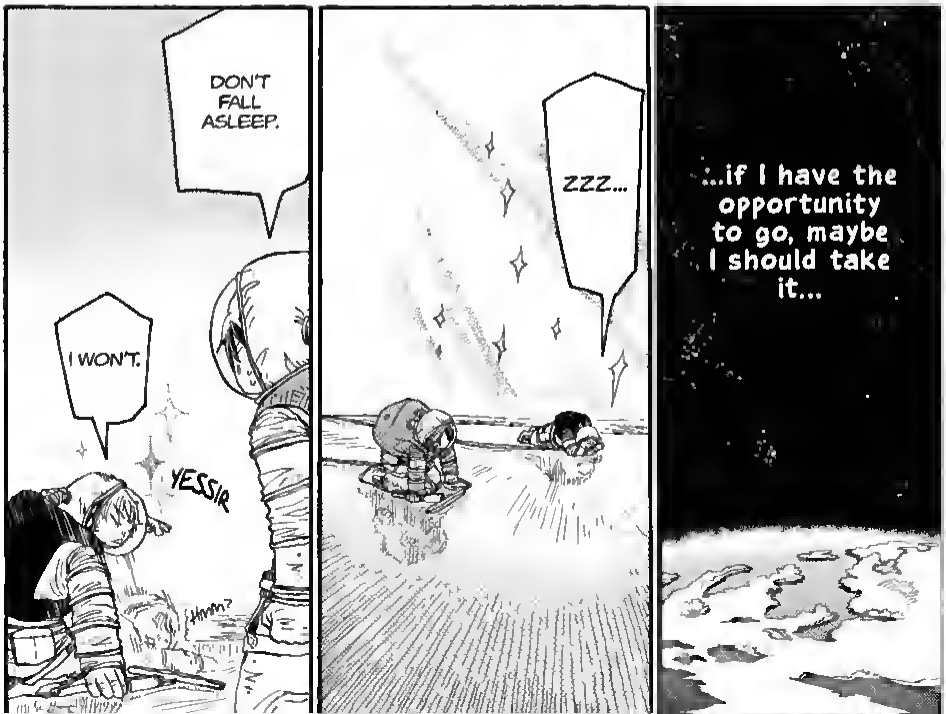

I WANT TO WASH WINDOWS LIKE MITSU.
..WITH HIS GOOFY SMILE...
GET THAT?
YOU'VE BECOME A WINDOW WASHER PEOPLE CAN RELY ON...
MITSU...
JIN, THAT'S MEAN.
LIKE MITSU? DON'T BE A WIMP.
WHAT A CREEP.
Mmm
DON'T RUSH THINGS.


I could feel the tension leaving my shoulders.
...ever rescued like I was just now?
Was Father...
YES.
OH, NOW I SWITCH WITH YUKISHIMA.
MASTER.
MITSUUU.
I'd like to be like Jin someday.


...everyone probably believes...
Without thinking too much about it...
He put it so simply.
YOU'RE RIGHT.
Mmm.
EH?
UM...
WE DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT'S DOWN THERE. THERE MAY NOT BE ANYTHING INTERESTING...
YUKISHIMA, HAVE YOU EVER THOUGHT ABOUT GOING TO THE SURFACE?
WOULDN'T YOU?
I'D LIKE TO GO DOWN.
...that they "would like to go to the surface"...


Do I...want to go?
Am I scared?


But...
I *am* scared...


DON'T FALL ASLEEP.
I WON'T.
YESSIR
Hmm?
ZZZ...
...if I have the opportunity to go, maybe I should take it...

floor 43: the beginning room




SO, SOHTA, YOU WORK AT THE GAS POWER PLANT?
YEAH, YEAH.
I'm tired
I HEAR THAT THE FACILITY IS GETTING OLD.
IS IT GOING TO BE RENOVATED?
OH. I DIDN'T KNOW.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON THERE THESE DAYS...
SOHTA, YOU WORK THERE.
THAT POWER PLANT PROVIDES ELECTRICITY TO THE UPPER LEVELS TOO...
...EVEN THOUGH THE LOWER LEVELS MAINTAIN IT.
AREN'T YOUR COLLEAGUES UNHAPPY ABOUT THAT?
HUH? I'VE NEVER THOUGHT ABOUT IT.
AM I WORRYING TOO MUCH? SOMETIMES PEOPLE GLARE AT ME 'CAUSE I WORK FOR THE PUBLIC PEACE BUREAU.
WHA?
HEY, ARE YOU WORKING FOR THE UPPER LEVELS?!
AHOO
THAT SO?
WELL, THINGS MUST BE FINE IF THAT'S HOW YOU FEEL ABOUT IT.
BUT APPARENTLY I'M DENSE.


DID YOU TELL YOUR WIFE YOU'D BE LATE?
NO.
?
IS IT ALWAYS LIKE THAT?
WHAT TIME IS IT NOW?
ONE IN THE MORNING.
MY WIFE'S CRANKY A LOT THESE DAYS...
...BUT I DON'T REALLY UNDERSTAND WHY.
...
I USED TO BE LIKE YOU, AND THEN MY GIRLFRIEND AND I BROKE UP.
OH.
IS THAT SO? THAT'S TOO BAD.
DO YOU GO OUT TOGETHER?
♫
WELL, I'VE GOT LOTS OF THINGS TO DO.
DO YOU LOVE YOUR WIFE?
OF COURSE.
Kayo's wonderful.
YOU SHOULD GO OUT TOGETHER ON YOUR NEXT DAY OFF.
NO...
...I'VE GOT STUFF TO—
N-O!
YOU GO SOME-WHERE WITH HER, OKAY?!
EH...? OKAY.


HUH? WHAT'S THIS?
SOHTA'S ACTUALLY WORKING OVERTIME?
PLEASE DON'T SAY SUCH THINGS.

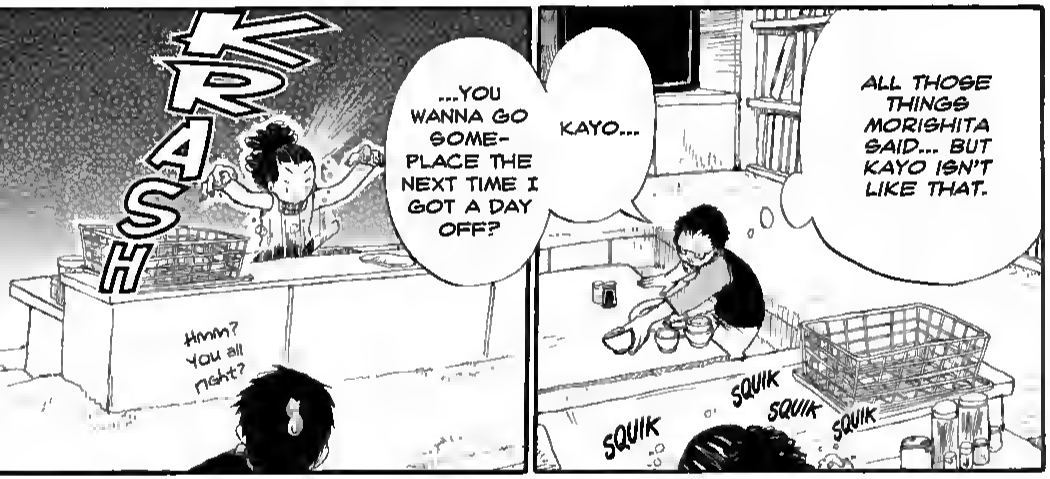

...
I DO MY WORK.
RIGHT, TAMACHI?
YOU KEEP TALKING TO YOURSELF. YOU'RE NOT CONCENTRATING AT ALL.
RIGHT, TAMACHI?
YEAH, SURE.
I DO MY WORK DURING THE DAY.
TAMACHI IS MUMBLING TOO NOW...
MUMBLE
MUMBLE
I'VE REPORTED IT MANY TIMES, BUT THEY WON'T DO ANYTHING UNTIL THERE'S A HOLE IN IT.
ACID HAS CORRODED THIS PIPE.
THEN THEY'LL JUST PATCH UP THE HOLE AND WON'T REPLACE THE PIPE...


MOSSHI.
HM, MAYBE MORISHITA WILL BE THERE...
UGH. TO THE MIDDLE LEVELS?
AH, I REMEMBER NOW. SOHTA...
...THE CHIEF WANTS YOU TO DELIVER SOME DOCUMENTS.
THANKS FOR YOUR ADVICE THE OTHER DAY.
SOHTA.
HE STILL DOESN'T GET IT.
YES, OF COURSE.
DON'T GO JUST BECAUSE I TOLD YOU TO. GO BECAUSE YOU WANT TO.
I'M THINKING ABOUT TAKING HER SOMEWHERE LIKE YOU SAID.
...


BUT THERE'RE THINGS THAT I CAN ONLY DO NOW.
YEAH...
...IT'LL BE TOO LATE IF YOU FIGURE IT OUT AFTER SHE'S GONE.
SOHTA...
...
SPARKLE
AND I BELIEVE KAYO ALSO FEELS WHAT I'M DOING...
...IS IMPORTANT.
...AND THEN IN THE END WE BROKE UP.
I STOPPED SEEING MY GIRLFRIEND BECAUSE I WANTED TO SPEND MORE TIME STUDYING FOR MY PUBLIC PEACE BUREAU EXAM...


BUT IT WAS TOO LONG TO WAIT, AND NOW SHE'S BECOME A PART OF MY PAST. I CAN'T GO SEE HER ANYMORE.
THAT'S WHAT SHE SAID.
I'LL BE WAITING FOR YOU.
MOSSHI, DON'T TORTURE YOURSELF.
I DON'T FEEL LIKE I'VE BECOME INDEPENDENT ENOUGH, SO I CAN'T SEE MY PARENTS YET.
YOU NEVER KNOW WHEN A LOWER-LEVEL BUREAU EMPLOYEE IS GONNA GET FIRED.
...
SOHTA, YOU TAKE CARE OF YOUR WIFE.
RIGHT ...?
I DO...

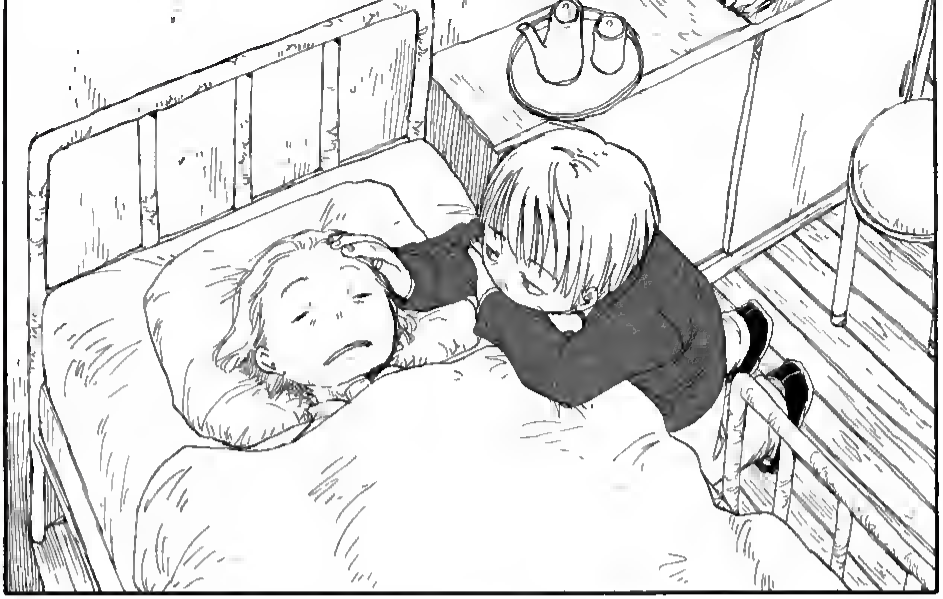

CLINK
CLINK

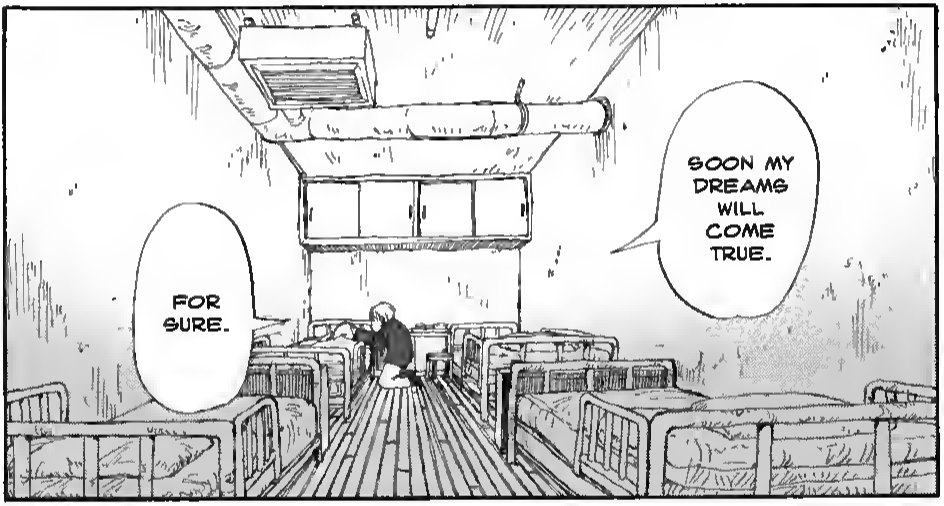

KRASH
...YOU WANNA GO SOME-PLACE THE NEXT TIME I GOT A DAY OFF?
Hmm? You all right?
KAYO...
ALL THOSE THINGS MORISHITA SAID... BUT KAYO ISN'T LIKE THAT.
SQUIK
SQUIK
SQUIK
SQUIK


HMM. SO WHERE SHOULD WE GO?
I WILL.
SQUIK
WILL YOU BE ABLE TO TAKE A DAY OFF?
ANY-WHERE.
WHERE DO YOU WANNA GO?
YES.


MR. NISHIMARU ISN'T HERE TODAY, EITHER.
NO.
CHAK
OH?
HE DOESN'T LOOK LIKE IT, BUT HE SEEMS TO HAVE THE FUNDS.
MR. NISHIMARU WILL GET IT FOR YOU.
SO... I NEED TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT THE MONEY...
WHA?!
BY THE WAY, I'VE ASKED SOMEONE I KNOW TO START MAKING THE DESCENT DEVICE.
REALLY?
THEN HOW IS HE SO WEALTHY?
DON'T KNOW. KINDA SCARY.
HA HA, YOU CAN'T BRING IN THAT KIND OF MONEY DOING RESEARCH.
OH! MAYBE HE MADE TONS OF MONEY WITH HIS RESEARCH?


SHE'S SLEEPING WELL.
THEN HER CONDITION HASN'T CHANGED.
AH. IT'S BEEN A WHILE.
PLEASE FORGIVE ME. I COULDN'T COME VISIT AFTER I MOVED.
HEY.
YES?
WE'VE GOT A PATIENT. COME HELP.
YES.
AH, MR. NISHIMARU. THE DRUG-MAKER YOU INTRODUCED US TO SOLD US DRUGS AT A GOOD PRICE.
THANKS.
THEY WERE HAPPY WITH THE DEAL TOO...
...BUT PLEASE REPORT BACK TO THEM ABOUT HOW WELL THE DRUGS WORKED.

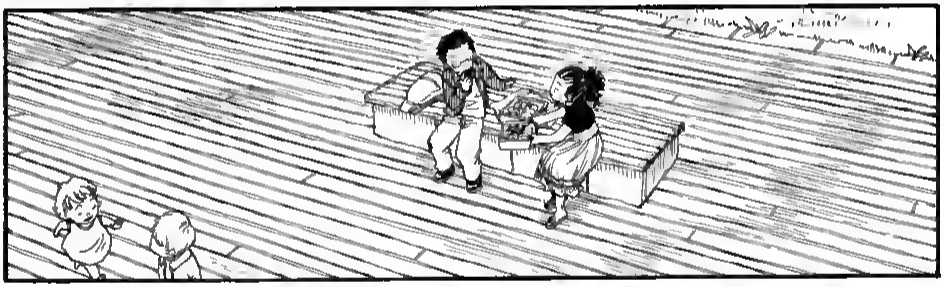



SOON MY DREAMS WILL COME TRUE.
FOR SURE.


AH...
EXCUSE ME... I WON'T BE ABLE TO COME FOR A FEW DAYS.
ALL RIGHT, WE'LL TELL MR. NISHIMARU, AND ASK HIM FOR MONEY TOO.

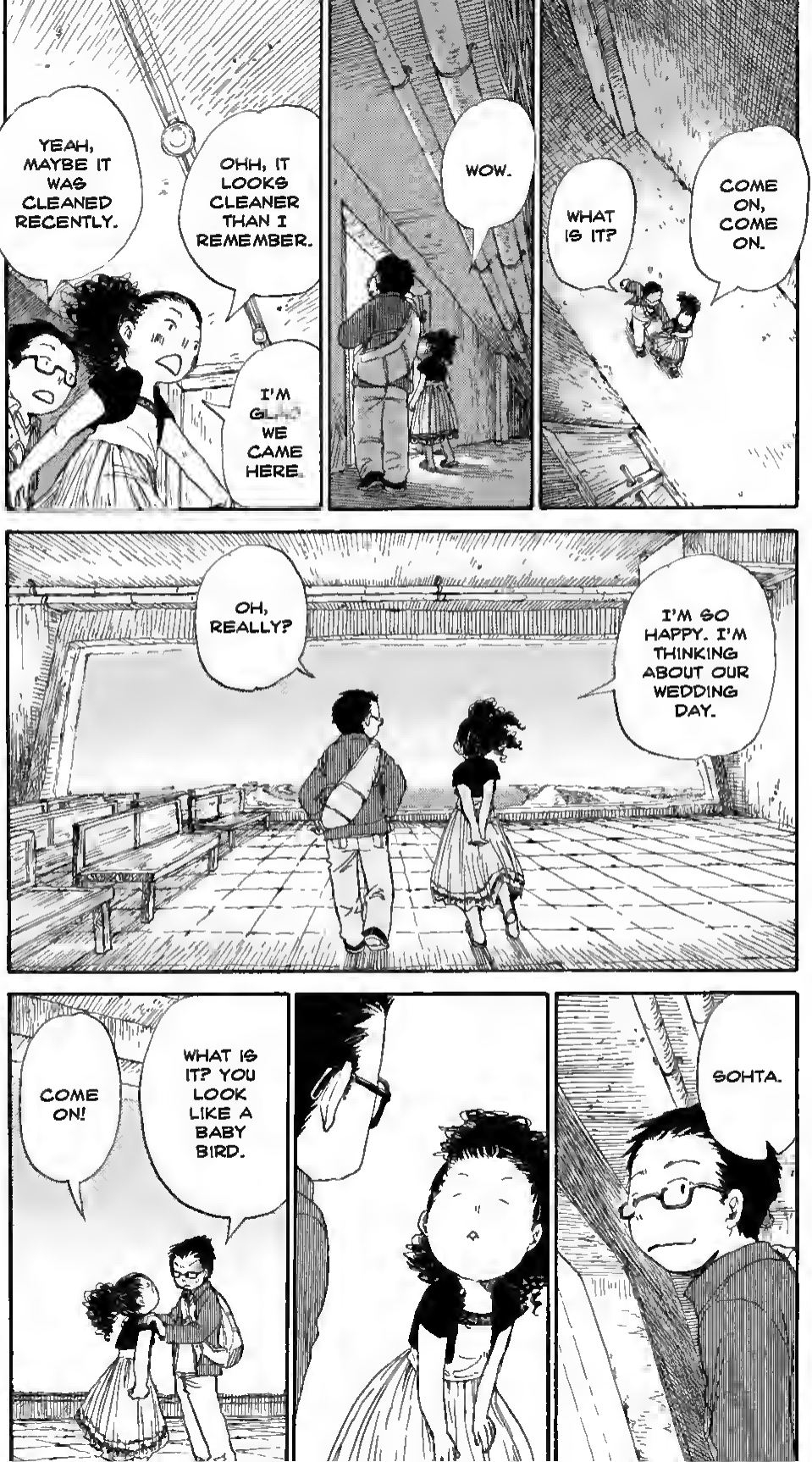

HEY, LANDLADY. WHAT IS IT?
YOU HAVE A PHONE CALL.
ALL RIGHT, I'LL GO ANSWER IT.
NOK NOK
ALL RIGHT, WE'LL BE LEAVING NOW.
KAYO.
SWP
SWP
HMM?
YES? A METAL FABRICA-TION FACTORY?
FOR SOHTA? YES... YES...
LET US GO OUT JUST THIS ONE DAY!
WELL, LET'S GO!
IT WAS YOUR MOTHER, ASKING HOW YOU'RE DOING.
HMM.
KAYO, WHAT WAS IT?
KACHAK

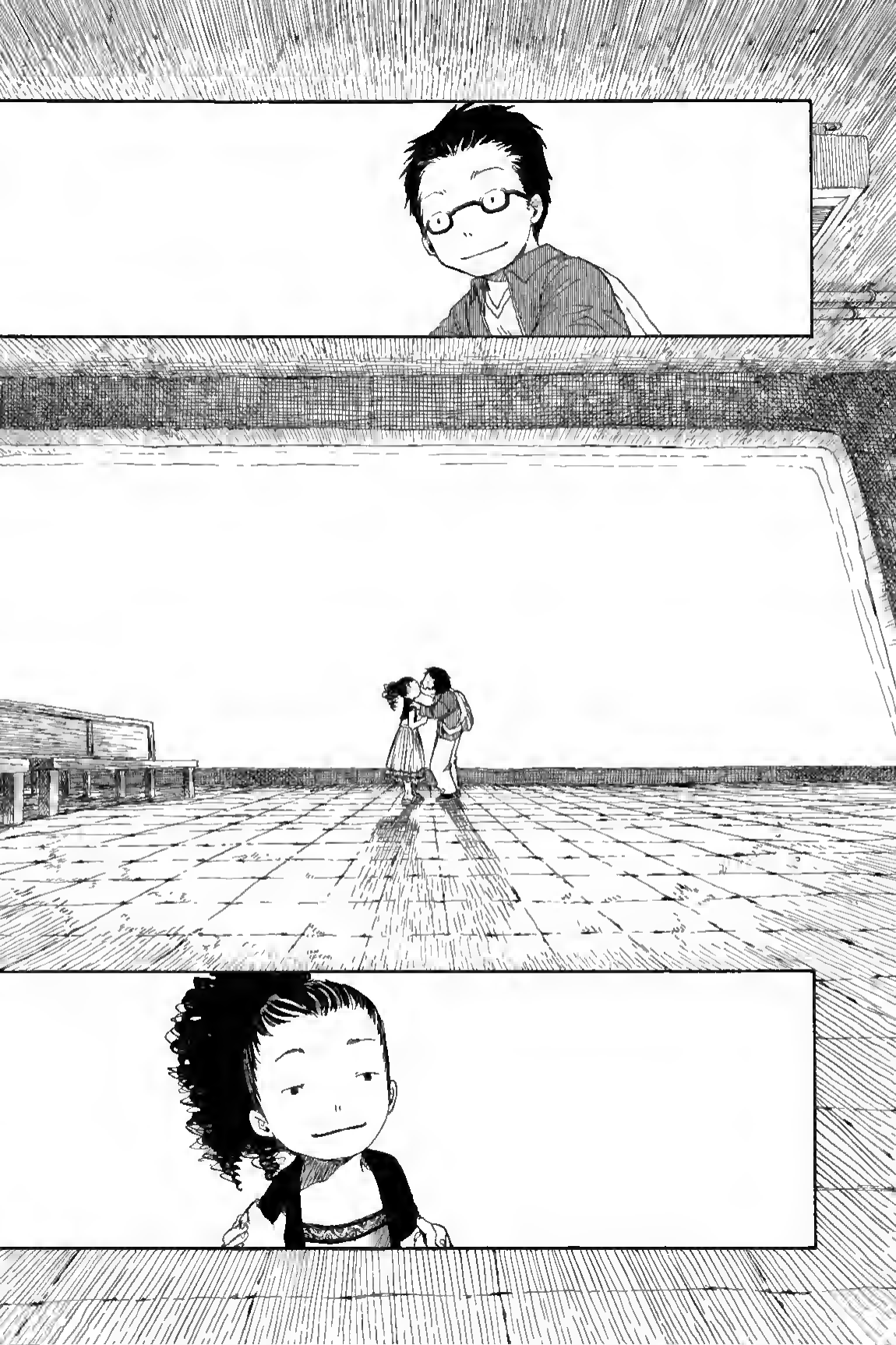





IT'S NICE TO GET OUT SOMETIMES.

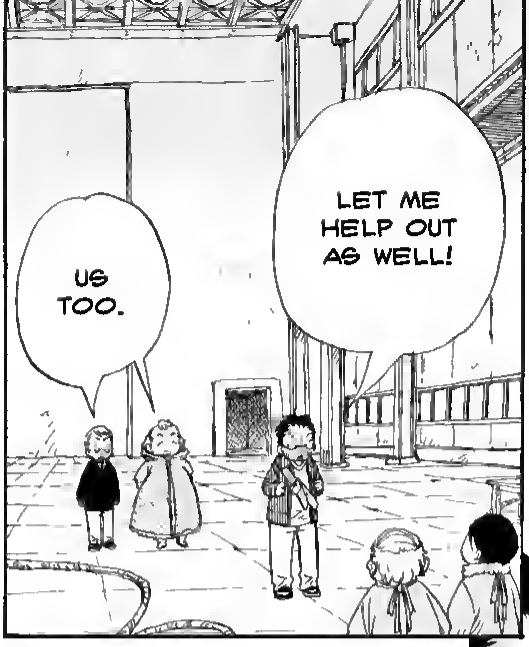

Sohta, listen.
Can you understand?
I'm really really happy...
...to be able to spend time with you today.
MMM.
AH!
I'LL GET BACK TO WORKING HARD AGAIN TOMORROW.
...
But he's so dense!
SOHTA, THERE'S ONE MORE PLACE I'D LIKE TO GO.

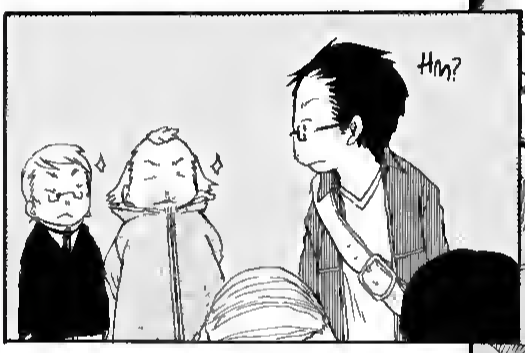

COME ON, COME ON.
WHAT IS IT?
WOW.
OHH, IT LOOKS CLEANER THAN I REMEMBER.
YEAH, MAYBE IT WAS CLEANED RECENTLY.
I'M GLAD WE CAME HERE.
I'M SO HAPPY. I'M THINKING ABOUT OUR WEDDING DAY.
OH, REALLY?
SOHTA.
WHAT IS IT? YOU LOOK LIKE A BABY BIRD.
COME ON!

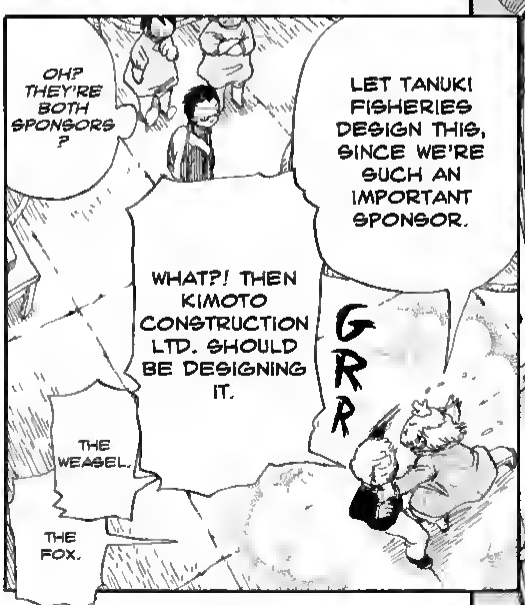


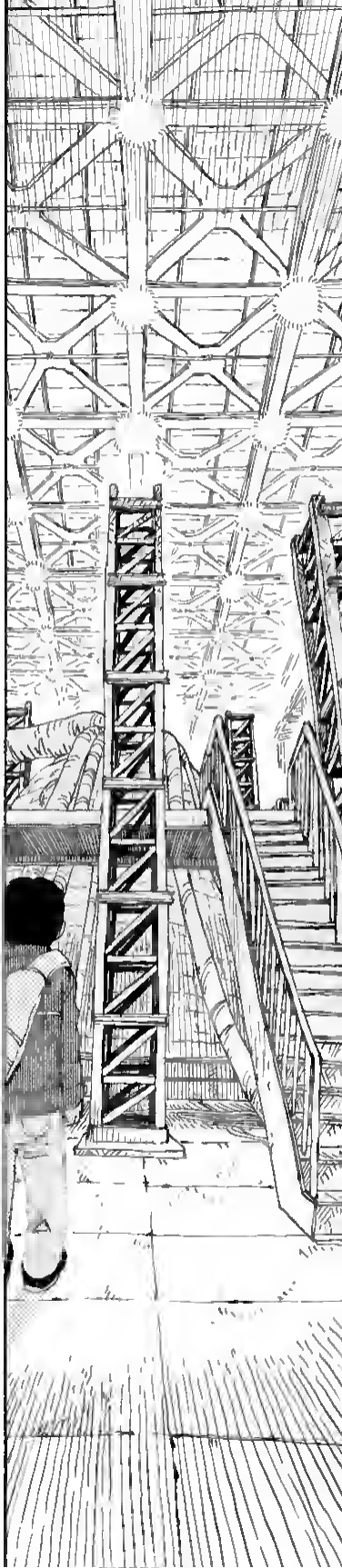

RECENTLY I'VE BEEN FEELING LIKE YOU'RE SOMEPLACE FAR AWAY.
WHAT...
WHUMP
BUT DON'T WORRY, IT WAS ALL IN MY HEAD.
YOU HAVEN'T CHANGED.
THEN I SHOULD TELL YOU NOW THAT I'LL BE A BIT BUSIER SOON AND WON'T BE ABLE TO COME HOME TOO OFTEN.
WHA?!
REALLY?
...OKAY.
DO WHAT YOU NEED TO DO.
I'LL BE WAITING.
...
THANKS.
AH.
THE FACTORY CALLED YOU.
!
YOU SHOULD'VE TOLD ME EARLIER!


THIS WAY, THIS WAY.
WE DON'T HAVE ENOUGH SPACE TO BUILD IT...
...AND THERE ARE A LOT OF SMALL PARTS, SO WE'VE ASKED SOME FRIENDS TO HELP OUT TOO.
YOU CAN ASK THEM IF YOU'VE GOT ANY QUESTIONS.
Thank you
AS I'VE ALREADY TOLD YOU, WE'RE NOT CLOSE TO BEING FINISHED YET.
YES.


LET ME HELP OUT AS WELL!
US TOO.


Hm?


LET TANUKI FISHERIES DESIGN THIS, SINCE WE'RE SUCH AN IMPORTANT SPONSOR.
GRR
WHAT?! THEN KIMOTO CONSTRUCTION LTD. SHOULD BE DESIGNING IT.
OH? THEY'RE BOTH SPONSORS?
THE WEASEL.
THE FOX.



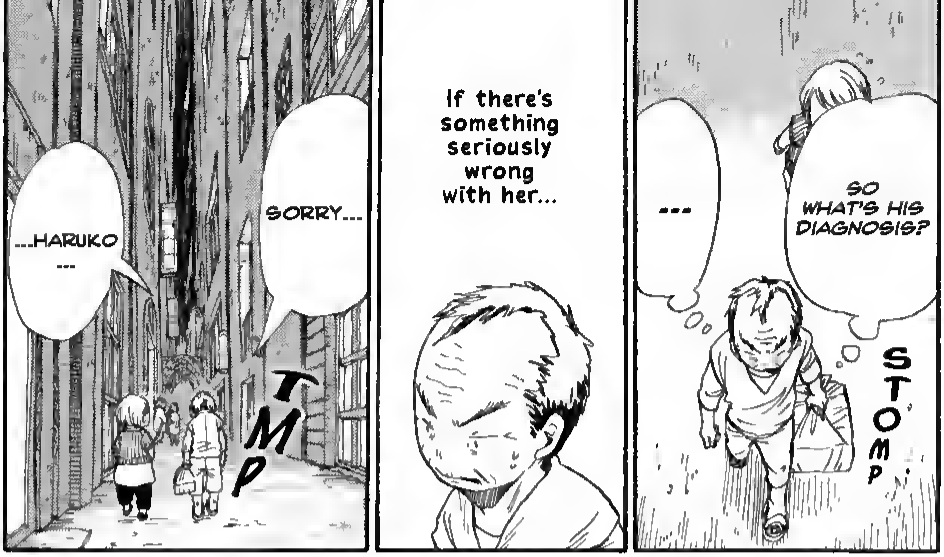


floor 44: the druggist's diagnosis



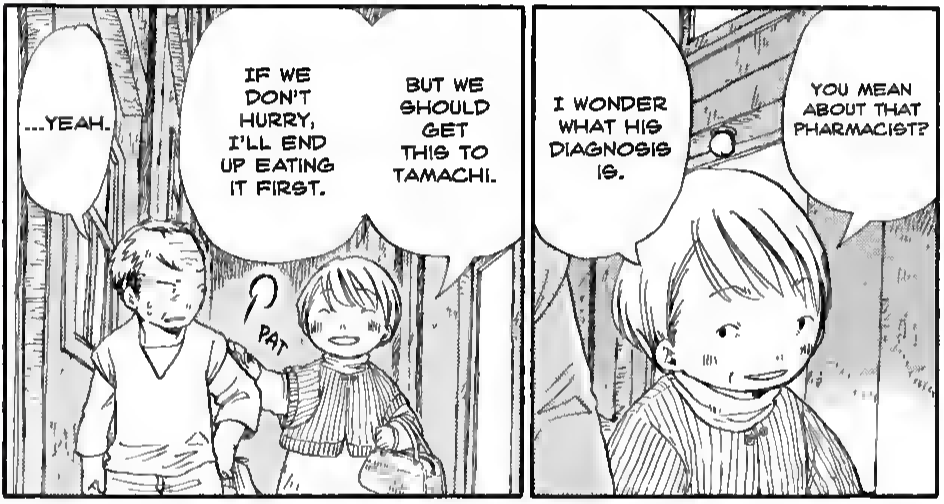

OH, HARUKO'S HERE TOO.
OH, PHARMACIST. LONG TIME NO SEE.
AH, SO GRACIOUS.
?
...
YUP.
WE'RE DELIVERING THIS.
YES.
YOU'RE GOING SOME-WHERE?
I HATE THAT PLACE.
HEY JIN, ARE YOU TAKING HER TO THE HOSPITAL?
WHIP
...
?
HARUKO, YOUR COMPLEX-ION...


YES, HE IS.
THAT DOCTOR PROBABLY ISN'T ANY GOOD ANYWAY.
HARUKO.
IF YOU REALLY DON'T WANT TO GO, I'LL ASK SOMEONE I KNOW.
...
!
YOU SHOULD HAVE THEM SEE HARUKO.
GAH!
IF MY DIAGNOSIS IS CORRECT—
WHOA.
PSS
LET ME TAKE A BLOOD SAMPLE.
OH.
STOMP STOMP STOMP STOMP
STOMP STOMP
...ALL RIGHT?
I'LL BRING THE DOCTOR OVER TO YOUR PLACE A WEEK FROM TODAY...
HEY.
JIN.
...


...HARUKO

SORRY...
TMP
If there's something seriously wrong with her...

SO WHAT'S HIS DIAGNOSIS?
STOMP


...YEAH.
IF WE DON'T HURRY, I'LL END UP EATING IT FIRST.
BUT WE SHOULD GET THIS TO TAMACHI.
PAT
I WONDER WHAT HIS DIAGNOSIS IS.
YOU MEAN ABOUT THAT PHARMACIST?




"DON'T GO THAT WAY..."
"AKI."
HAHH
WHY'RE THESE TWO WEARING THEM NOW?
TAKE THOSE GLASSES OFF.
YOU ALL RIGHT?
YOU WERE GROANING, TAMACHI.
...
...
SO, TAMACHI, WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THEM?
I GAVE THEM SOME GLASSES.
TAMAO ...


THANKS.
I BROUGHT THESE FOR YOU.
SINCE WE COULDN'T COME SEE YOU FOR A WHILE.
EH?
UHOH.


WHAT?
CAN'T YOU EVEN SAY THANK YOU PROPERLY?!

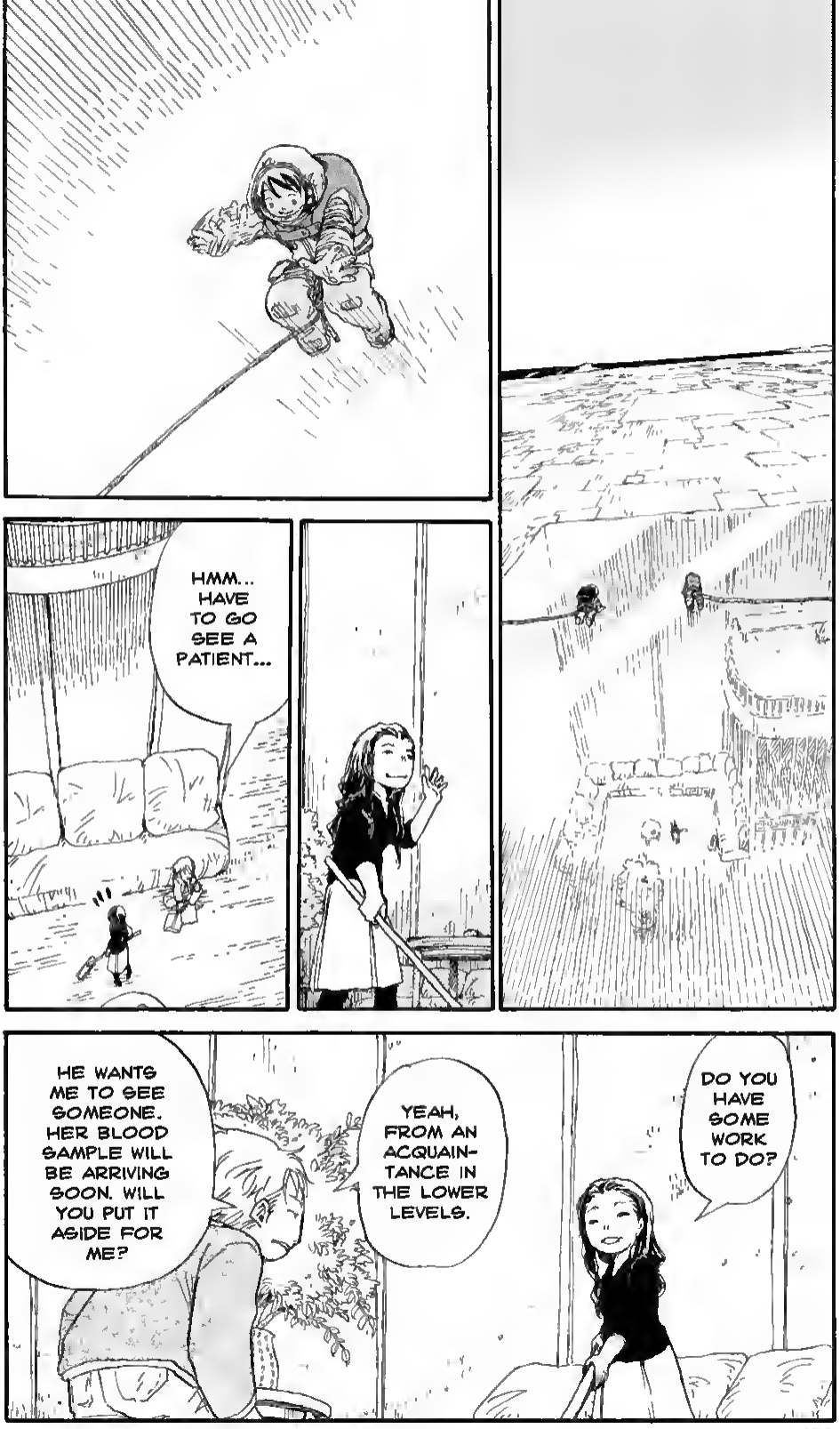

TAMACHI.
I'M SORRY...
SIGH
THEY REALLY LOOK DELI-CIOUS.
THANK YOU VERY MUCH, HARUKO.
YOU DON'T NEED TO SCOLD HIM.

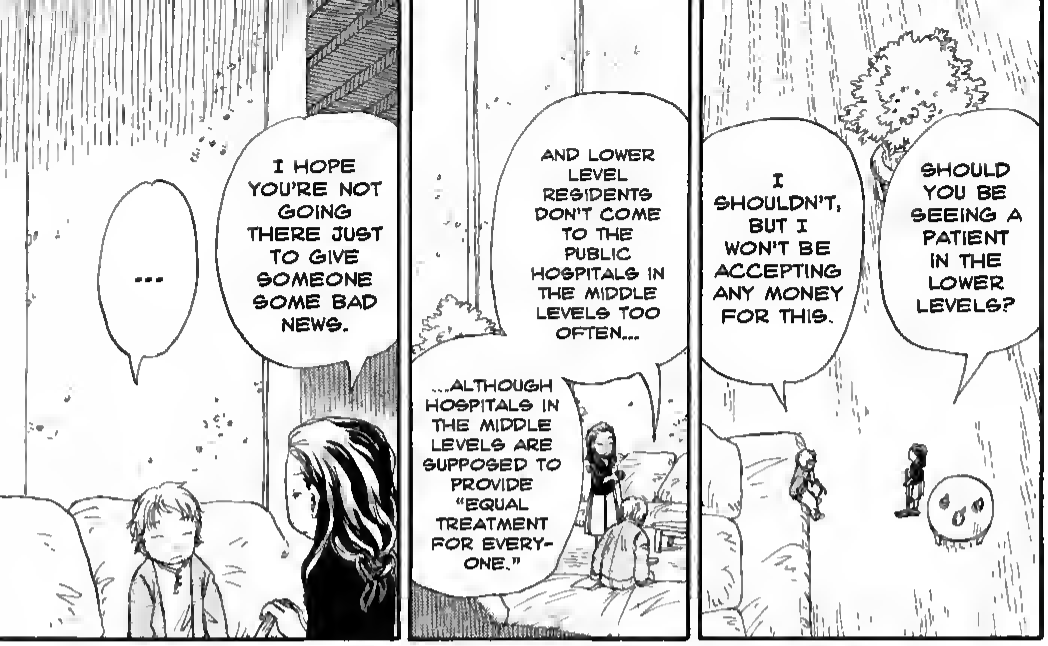

TAMACHI...
WE WELCOME FOOD ANYTIME.
JIN, PLEASE VISIT AGAIN.
OHO.
Just food?
DON'T MENTION IT.
HARUKO, THANKS FOR THE FOOD.
...
YOU DIDN'T LIKE THE TASTE?
I'M SORRY.
!
YOU HARDLY... NO, YOU DIDN'T EAT ANY OF THE OMELETS.
WHEN I HEARD THAT YOU TAUGHT AKI HOW TO MAKE THOSE OMELETS...
YOU SHOULD'VE TOLD ME THEN.
I FIRST MADE THEM FOR YOU A LONG TIME AGO.
NO, THAT'S NOT IT.
YOU'RE LYING.
YES, I DID.

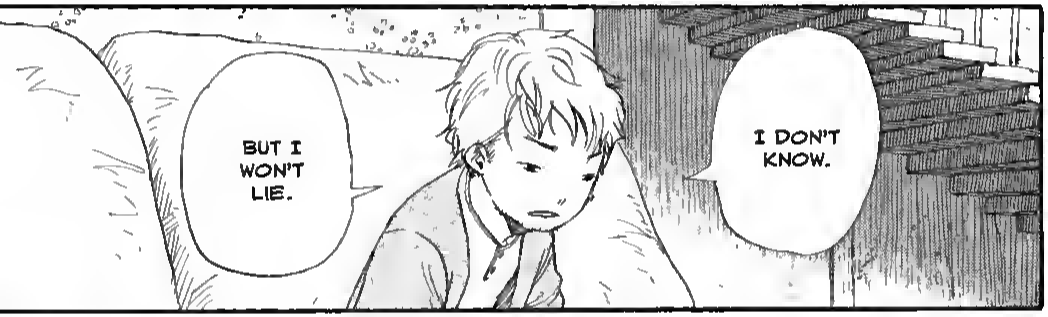

I CAN PRETEND EVERYTHING'S FINE. PLEASE DON'T TELL TAMAO ABOUT THIS.
I'M SORRY.
...WHY SHOULD I BE ABLE TO KEEP EATING THEM...
...I THOUGHT...
JUST FORGIVE YOURSELF.
HEY, TAMACHI.
YOU'RE ALIVE, SO YOU CAN LAUGH AND CRY.
YOU MUST'VE BEEN PRETENDING NOTHING WAS WRONG ALL THIS TIME.
I'M SORRY I REMINDED YOU OF AKI.

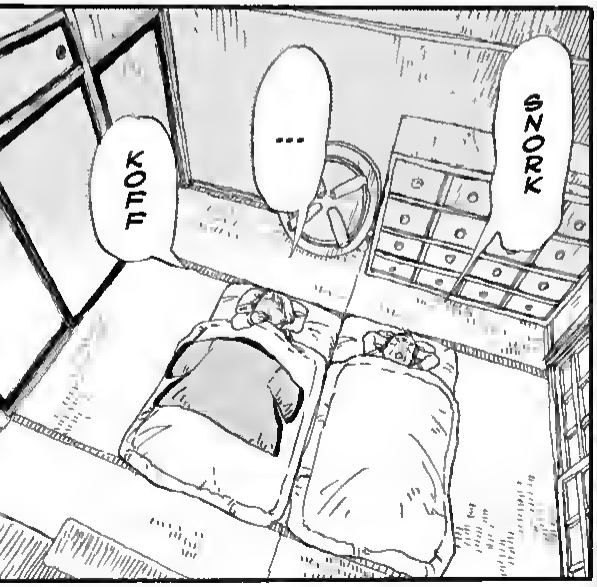

I can't save anyone, even in my dreams.
But, Haruko...
HEY, TAMACHI. CAN WE COME OVER AGAIN?
I'LL BRING MITSU ALONG.
ALL RIGHT?
ALL RIGHT?
I'D LIKE TO SEE MITSU TOO.

SURE.

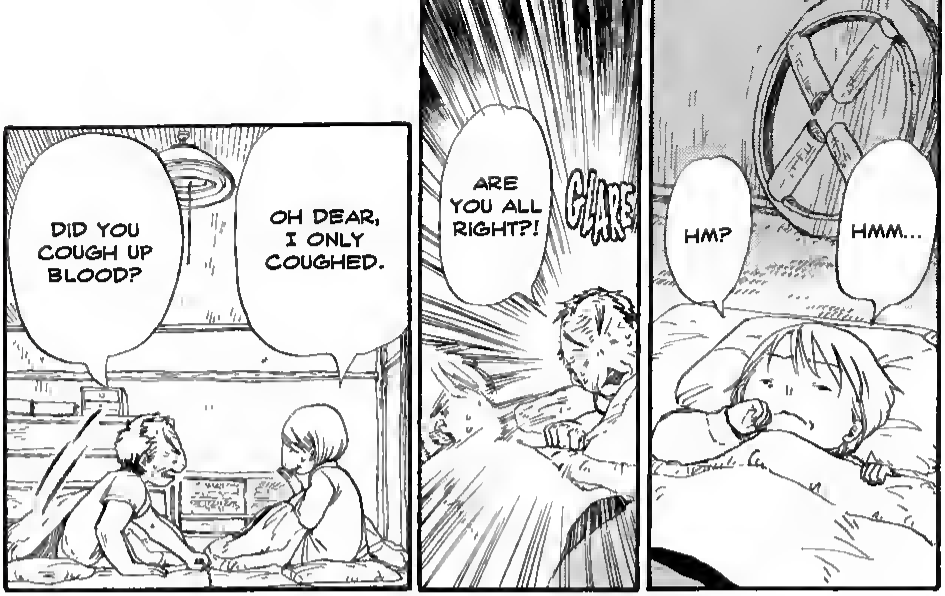

HMM... HAVE TO GO SEE A PATIENT...
HE WANTS ME TO SEE SOMEONE. HER BLOOD SAMPLE WILL BE ARRIVING SOON. WILL YOU PUT IT ASIDE FOR ME?
YEAH, FROM AN ACQUAINTANCE IN THE LOWER LEVELS.
DO YOU HAVE SOME WORK TO DO?

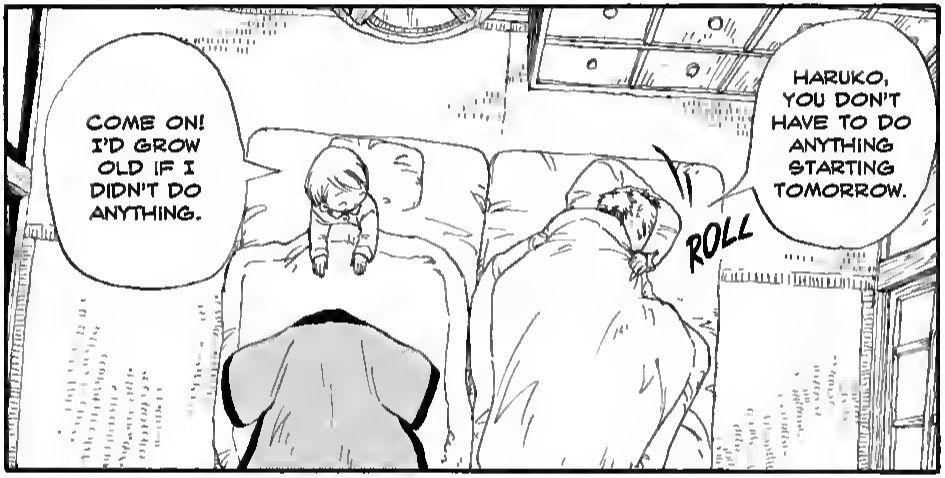

...
I HOPE YOU'RE NOT GOING THERE JUST TO GIVE SOMEONE SOME BAD NEWS.
AND LOWER LEVEL RESIDENTS DON'T COME TO THE PUBLIC HOSPITALS IN THE MIDDLE LEVELS TOO OFTEN...
...ALTHOUGH HOSPITALS IN THE MIDDLE LEVELS ARE SUPPOSED TO PROVIDE "EQUAL TREATMENT FOR EVERY-ONE."
I SHOULDN'T, BUT I WON'T BE ACCEPTING ANY MONEY FOR THIS.
SHOULD YOU BE SEEING A PATIENT IN THE LOWER LEVELS?


BUT I WON'T LIE.
I DON'T KNOW.


KOFF
...
SNORK




DID YOU COUGH UP BLOOD?
OH DEAR, I ONLY COUGHED.
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?!
CLARE
HM?
HMM...


COME ON! I'D GROW OLD IF I DIDN'T DO ANYTHING.
HARUKO, YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO ANYTHING STARTING TOMORROW.
ROLL


LET'S GO BACK TO SLEEP.
CLARE
I'll make Jin worry even more.
She sighed
SIGH...
BUT I AM WORRIED... WHAT IF IT'S SERIOUS?

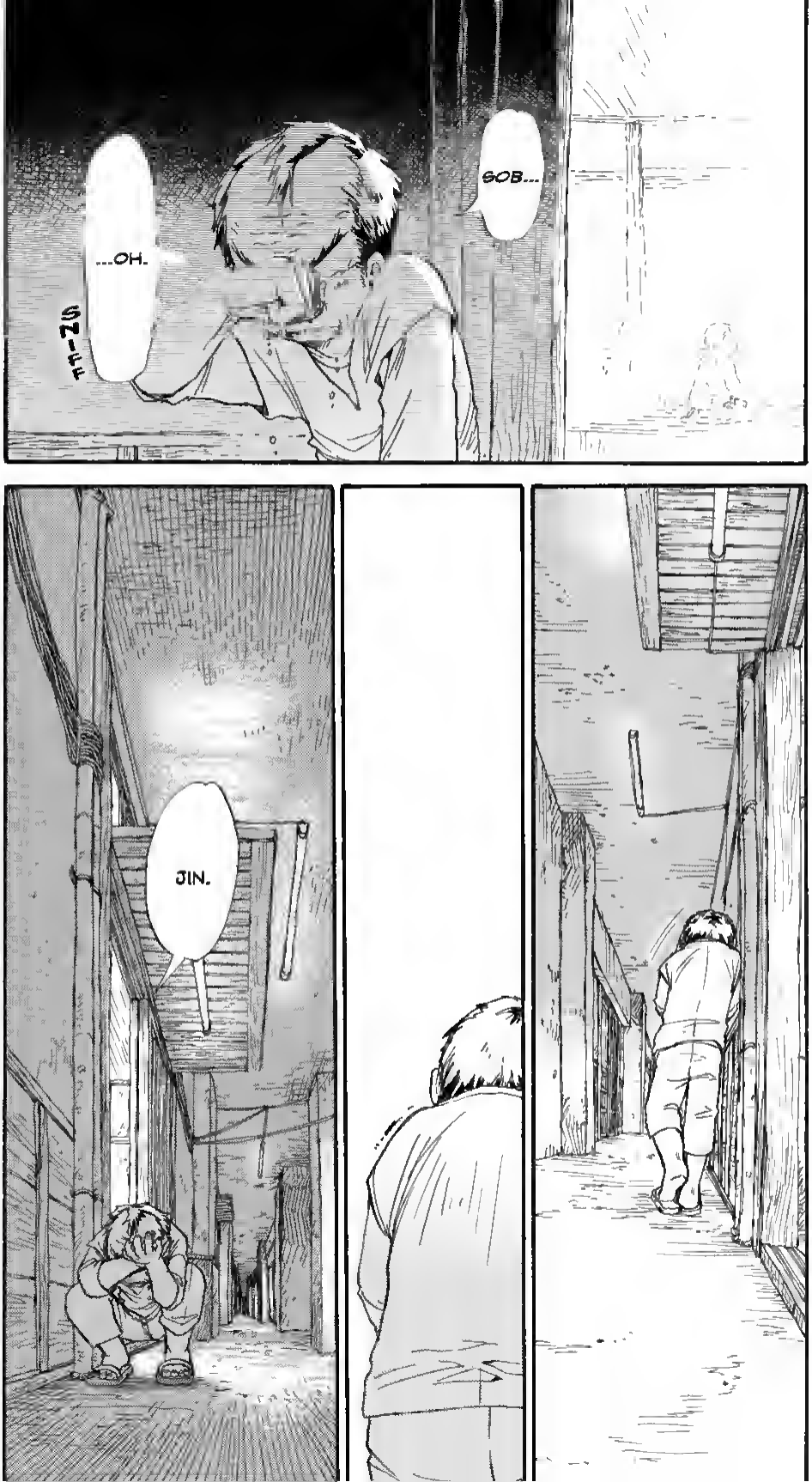

IF THE RESULTS ARE NOT GOOD...
...HOW CAN I BOUNCE BACK?
DON'T WORRY, STAY CALM.
I'M STILL FINE...
HUH? TO TAMACHI'S PLACE?
YOU'LL BE ABLE TO EAT DELICIOUS EGGS.
I'LL COME WITH.
...
...
HO HO
HO HO
HO HO
HO HO
RATTLE
RATTLE


WAS THAT KAGEYAMA?!
That shining fore-head
LOOKED LIKE HIM...
HE'S STARTING A NEW JOB.
THAT WAS A RICKSHAW. AMAZING... HE NEVER MISSES AN OPPORTUNITY.
NOPE.
BUT HE SAID HE WOULDN'T PUSH HIMSELF TOO HARD.
KAGEYAMA'S A HARD WORKER, SO HE MIGHT END UP TRYING TOO HARD ANYWAY.
YEAH.
MITSU, TAKE CARE OF FUYU.
I didn't know she was in the rick-shaw
You didn't notice?
WHY DON'T YOU TAKE HER WITH YOU?
Hm?
RATTLE
RATTLE


SO.
HA HA
YOU ARE SO RIGHT.
THAT'S GOT NOTHING TO DO WITH HOW GOOD HE IS.
HAH.
HIS WIFE IS ORIGINALLY FROM THE LOWER LEVELS.
...BUT YOU CAN TRUST HIM.
HERE'S THE DOCTOR. HE'S YOUNG...
I HAVE THE TEST RESULTS FROM YOUR BLOOD SAMPLE A WEEK AGO...
YOUR IMMUNO-DEFICIENCY SYNDROME COMPLICA-TIONS...
SQUEEZE
...AND THE PHARMACIST WAS RIGHT.

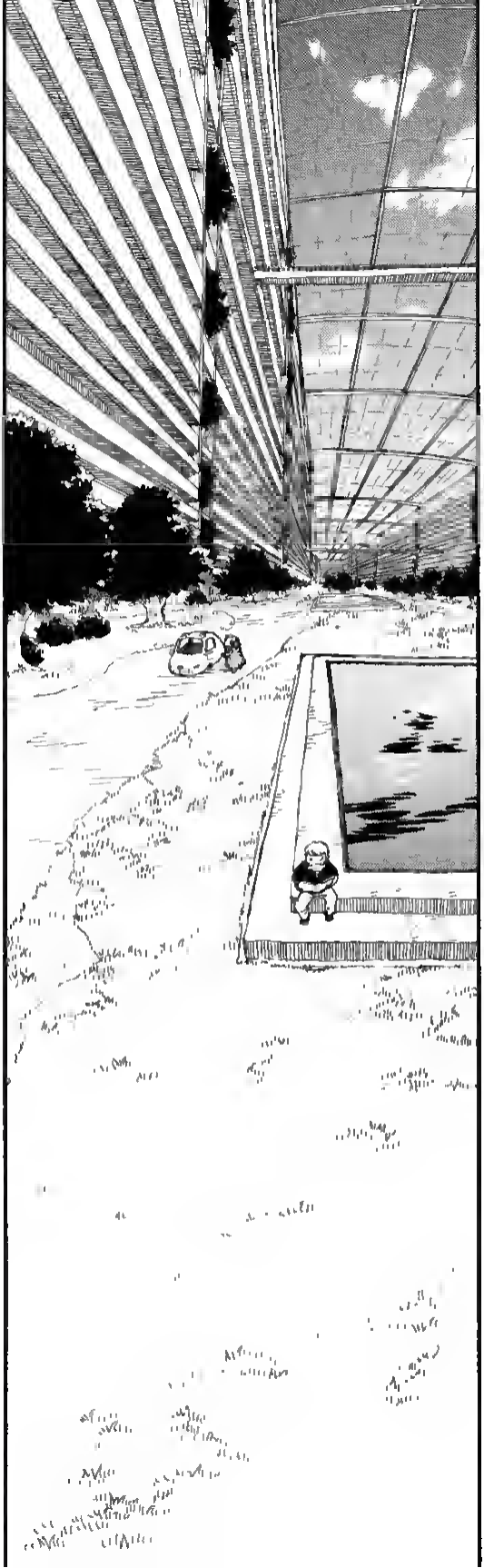

...ARE COMPLETELY RESOLVED.
YOU MUST BE LIVING A WELL-ORDERED, STRESS-FREE LIFE.
THE WHITE BLOOD CELLS AND NEUTROPHIL COUNTS ARE STABLE, AND THERE ARE NO VIRAL INFECTIONS.
MAYBE YOUR BODY HAS DEVELOPED A NEW ANTIBODY.
...OH.
WE THOUGHT...
HEY, JIN.
I CAN'T TRUST HIM.
REMEMBER THE LAST TIME...
SHE'S FINE.


BELIEVE ME.
I WILL NOT LIE.
SHWOO
...
REALLY.
HEY, YOU PHARMACIST! YOU MADE SUCH A BIG THING OUT OF THIS.
YOU SHOULD'VE GIVEN ME YOUR DIAGNOSIS FIRST.
You can kiss my smelly feet!
It turns out
I WAS GIVING YOU GOOD MEDS!
I don't care!
YOU SHOULD GO GET A MORE DETAILED CHECKUP, BUT YOU CAN REST EASY NOW.
HEH HEH. I'M ABOUT TO CRY.
HMPH.
I'LL MAKE SOME TEA.
PLIP
...
Hah...


SOB...
...OH.
SNIFF
JIN.


YOU'RE... BETTER... NOW...
MUMBLE
...
MUMBLE
YES?
WHAT'RE YOU DOING OUT HERE?
OH.
...HAS HAPPENED NOW, IN MY OLD AGE...
SOMETHING THAT MAKES ME SO HAPPY...


SOB
HEY, JIN.
I'M...
...A LUCKY WOMAN.



in the loft



Thanks to Egami, Hirai, Kasai, Fumika, and you, for reading

saturn apartments

SATURN APARTMENTS
Volume 5
VIZ Signature Edition

Story and Art by HISAE IWAOKA

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THE END OF SATURN APARTMENTS 5

In the Next Volume

Living isn't easy in the lower levels of the Ring System, a floating civilization constructed when Earth wes abandoned as a nature preserve. Sixteen-year-old Mitsu got a job washing windows for the wealthy residents of the upper levels after his father, also a window washar, fell from his tethar. Now Mitsu's been asked to man an illegal craft that's descending to the surface of the earth. But it seems everyone in this divided society has a secret aganda. Mitsu alone must dacide if ha'a ready to taka tha journay of a lifetima...

